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SONGS

CHIEFLY FROM THE GERMAN

By Bishop Spalding.

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SONGS

CHIEFLY FROM THE GERMAN

BY

J. L. SPALDING

Bishop of Peoria

Hast thou something? sell it to me,
I'll pay thee what is right;
Art thou something? Oh then let us
Make interchange of soul.
SCHILLER.

Who loveth not true poetry
Barbarian is, who'er he be.
GOETHE.

CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG AND COMPANY
1896

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A.D. 1895

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SONGS

CHIEFLY FROM THE GERMAN

PEACE

NOW storms and clouds have died away,
And on the mountains sleeps the snow;
All bathed in light of golden day
The whole world rests — forget thy woe.
In heaven and on the earth is peace;
In thy heart, too, let trouble cease.

The village bells send forth sweet sound,
And in the meadows bright dew lies;
With Sabbath stillness earth is crowned,
And not a cloud obscures the skies.
In heaven and on the earth is peace;
In thy heart, too, let trouble cease.

Make no complaint, whate'er thy pain;
Others have borne far worse than thine;
Brave strugglers only victory gain,
And know the rest which is divine.
In heaven and on the earth is peace;
In thy heart, too, let trouble cease.

BODENSTEDT.

HOW THE CHILDREN READ

HAVE you not seen — but no, you have not seen,
Yet pity 't is, for he is fair to see —
My little blue-eyed boy, just three years old,
When he his father's books or letters reads?
How understandingly he takes the thing
And follows with his finger 'long the lines,
Uttering the while his little store of words, —
Papa, mamma, and baby boy is good, —
Speaking with modulation true and sweet,
And all intent upon his childish task,
Though not a letter of the whole he knows;
And we, his parents, laugh, nor stint our praise,
Saying how prettily our baby reads;
Then he looks up with glee, self-satisfied.
The lesson often gives me room for thought:
Upon the seat beside my blue-eyed boy
I see a throng of men full-grown and wise,
Who with most solemn air intently pore
On many thousand books they hold in hand.
Huge volumes and the lesser all are there,
Not merely fables and the light romance;
But rather weighty tomes of matter deep

How the Children Read

They con: the book of art and science, too,
And human history, and greater still,
That mighty volume shut with iron clasp,
Upon whose titlepage is written Nature.
They read all earnestly and in loud voice,
And follow with the finger every line —
The greater — while the lesser give due heed.
But many a book I fear is upside down,
The letters standing all upon their heads.
And the Great Father — so at least I think —
Looks smilingly upon this baby world
And gently strokes so many a little head,
As if to say, "How well the child doth read,"
But whispers to Himself, "Wait yet awhile,
And I will take thee on my knee, and thou
Shalt learn of Me quite other lessons then."

BLOMBERG.

ON HIS WIFE'S DEATH

HOW bleak and waste, how bitter chill and drear,
Is grown the world for me, through which erewhile
I walked with gladness round me mile on mile,
For she, where'er I moved, was always near.

A breath has taken all that made life dear,
Darkened her eye, and frozen her sweet smile,
And hushed the silvery tones which could beguile
Each hour with laughter and with music's cheer.

Vain dream, that she at close of my brief day
Should soothe my pain and gently lull to sleep,
Holding Love's lamp along the downward way!
At least, O lost one, let thy spirit keep
Close to my heart while I on earth must stay,
Waiting to pass to thee across the deep.

BÜRGER.

SWEET BABY MINE, SLEEP NOW

SWEET baby mine, sleep now;
Soft shines the moon.
Why, baby, weepest thou?
Sleep, send thy boon.

All gently sleep now flies
On noiseless wing.
Hush, then, my sweet, thy cries,
And I will sing.

The moon knows pure delight
When her white beams
Fall from the plumes of night
On childhood's dreams.

She loves all children well,
But girls the best,
And pours her holiest spell
On maiden breast.

She gives them golden hair,
And deep blue eyes,
And makes them pure and fair
As her own skies.

Sweet Baby Mine, Sleep Now

When I on mother's breast,
A baby lay,
The moonbeams me caressed
With their mild ray;

And she full oft would sing,
"Shine, moonbeams, shine,
And all thy beauties bring
For baby mine."

And then the moon would smile
As though she heard,
And listened all the while
Her lips were stirred.

Ah! still I seem to see
Those blessed nights,
And, lost in revery,
Taste old delights.

Upon my bridal crown,
With her calm eyes
She looked approval down
From out the skies.

Sweet baby mine, sleep now,
Soft shines the moon.
Why, baby, weepest thou?
Sleep, send thy boon.

CLAUDIUS.

THE GYPSY QUEEN

A TREMBLE are the wooden walls,
The trumpets shrilly blow;
The sand is smoothed, the sharp whip calls,
Make ready for the show.

Here comes upon her coal-black steed
A woman of bold mien,
Brown arms and neck of covering freed,
And bare her feet are seen.

The castanets quick music make;
Outdrones the tambourine;
And, like a statue grown awake,
Dances the Gypsy Queen.

The dance is done — at end the show;
She deftly glides to earth,
And lightly springs, with a heigh-ho,
Into her wooden berth.

She squats on straw and satin there,
And lays her cards around;
Nor sad nor glad — she does n't care,
But whips her horse and hound.

ADA CHRISTEN.

DEATH

I SAT with my old nurse, so long ago,
In a great dreary house, — we two alone;
The glimmering fire burned with a feeble glow,
And round about November winds made moan,

Sighing like ghosts through the high, naked trees,
Whose boughs in sorrow seemed to bend and weep;
The sobbing rain was dank with foul disease,
And earth in withered leaves was covered deep.

The throstle in his cage flew to and fro;
The clock stood still, the weights had all run down;
The lamp went out; the hearth-fire, sinking low,
Threw shadows on the walls which made them frown.

In silence deep I listened and with dread,
While to my nurse, scarce breathing, fast I clung;
She prayed in whispers, bending low her head,
Until the flame was lost ashes among.

Then the charred sticks she lifted one by one,
And from the last alone a feeble spark
Leaped crackling forth, till quick its course being run,
Deep gloom enveloped us and all was dark.

"My child," she said, "see death's true image here."
She has herself long since gone to her rest,
Nor have I seen that house in many a year;
But on my soul the picture is impressed.

DAHN.

THE SUNNY LEGEND OF HAPPINESS

THEY are alone; for the mother comes
At nightfall only from the field.
The linden's leaves rustle without,
And grandmother tells the quiet child
The sunny legend of happiness.

She tells of a king's son who was once
By an angry, wicked fay bewitched;
Of a castle on a rock-bound coast,
Of the wild play of the raging waves,
And of a fisher's hut by the sea.

Year after year the prince still mourned;
A serpent now in mouldy earth,
He winds himself in golden chains;
A kiss alone can set him free,
A kiss from a rosy mouth and pure.

The fisher's daughter's fair to see,
And brave as she was beautiful,
Asunder broke the golden chains,
And her the prince, himself again,
Chose for his lady and his queen.

Grandmother ceased; the spinning-wheel
Whirred on; the maiden sat spell-bound;
Her folded hands lay on her breast,
And her great eyes in wonder fixed
Stared at the wide and vacant wall.

"How noble, grandmother, how fair!
O grandmother, were it but true,
Myself I should not be afraid,
But glad the serpent would embrace
Despite the shudder and death's dread.

"Why did men feign a thing so high,
If it on earth never befell?
Oh, in my soul is sadness deep
As though I stood in the church-yard,
Stood close by my dear father's grave."

"Be strong, O trembling child, be strong;
Wipe from thine eyes the welling tears;
For all of us it has deceived,
To all of us has spoken false,
The sunny legend of happiness."

ECKSTEIN.

I CANNOT SEE THEE, GENTLEST BIRD

I CANNOT see thee, gentlest bird,
Sitting 'mid blossoms white,
But all my inmost heart is stirred
With music's pure delight.

When dewy morning from the hills
Looks down their billowy sides,
Thy throat with maddest joy upthrills —
Ah! Time so swiftly glides.

So soon the leaves shall withered lie
On the damp wintry clay;
So soon the bright-eyed flowers shall die
With autumn's sad decay;

The clear, cool brook be frozen o'er,
And life sink in death's night:
Seek quick, O bird, some warmer shore,
For rapid is Time's flight.

VON EICHENDORFF.

THE ANGEL OF SLEEP

THE stars gleam in the heavenly blue,
Their rays kiss the fresh-fallen dew;
The flowers drink the fragrant air
And bend in sleep their heads so fair;
All motionless the trees stand now,
And not a breath stirs in the bough,
While hazy mist in the dim light
Brings many a shadowy form to sight.
On all a solemn stillness lies
As though life closed for aye its eyes.
No sound is heard in earth or sky,
Save where the brook goes murmuring by,
Running its course through meadows green
The silent slumberous banks between;
The winds whisper as in a dream
Soft lullaby to the dark stream,
Where, as its waves so lightly break,
The silvery moonbeams gently shake.
Doubtless, in this most quiet hour
Some angel comes with heavenly power,
To shut all weary eyes in sleep,

To pour on souls his blessings deep,
And, though the wound he may not heal,
Its smart to make us cease to feel.
O angel Sleep, God's holy guest,
Send us this night pure, soothing rest,
And in sweet dreams bring back again
The loved who long in graves have lain!

FALKLAND.

FAIR EVENING COMES AGAIN

FAIR Evening comes again;
And over wold and field
Peace falls like misty rain,
While earth in sleep is sealed.

All save the brook alone,
Which knows nor peace nor rest,
But flows with murmurous tone,
By fate still onward pressed.

To it no evening brings
The balm of sweet repose;
No soft voice gently sings
A song to lull its woes.

Such, too, thy lot, my heart;
In all thy toil and quest
God only can impart
The blessing of true rest.

FALLERSLEBEN.

MOST HAVE I LOVED FROM LOFTY TOWER

MOST have I loved from lofty tower
To look abroad upon the earth
And shout amid the quivering shower
Of ringing chimes in wildest mirth;
And now descended to the ground,
My heart still throbs with upward beat,
And so by you is foolish found
Who never were on that high seat.

FISCHER.

DECOY BIRD

THE children shout; the cuckoo cries,
Because the young Spring smiles.
Look, comrade, how the deep blue skies
Invite to frolic wiles.

Father says to daughter sweet,
Who is that I hear thee greet?
Round about the green hedge-row
Walking still I see him go.

Hat upon his head is pressed;
Like a Mayday he is dressed,
Looking here and looking there,
Finding nothing anywhere.

I will go myself and see
What his trouble well may be;
But he slips like bird away
Ere the father sees him,
Taking daughter's heart, they say,
Thinking that would please him.

FISCHER.

THE WEARIEST HOUR

IN the afternoon at three o'clock,
The weariest hour sounds;
Its stroke, a paralytic shock,
Through moveless air resounds.

The sweltering world all speechless lies,
As mute as is the grave;
The sun alone from burning skies
Outpours his glowing wave.

Like winds which from the desert blow,
His breath brings listlessness,
And takes from life its healthful glow,
Leaving but weariness.

The songs of birds have died away;
The shrill cicadas, too,
Have ceased to sing their tuneless lay,
And doves have ceased to coo.

The Weariest Hour

The lazy wave, with its moist lip,
  Scarce wets the blistered shore;
All motionless the anchored ship
  Dreams of the ocean's roar.

The mountain, like a giant slain,
  Is hushed in silence deep;
The thoughts and hopes which thrill man's brain
  Have fallen fast asleep.

No sound, no stir, no whispered breath,
  No faintest sign of life, —
As though Earth's spirit, sunk in death,
  Had given o'er the strife.

FISCHER.

WHITHER?

BUT yesterday a rill,
Which, like a silver thread,
Winds round some flowery hill;
Lo! now in wider bed,
A brook that gayly sings,
And its bright water flings.

But yesterday a child,
Playing in soft sunshine,
Close to a mother mild;
To-day a maiden fine,
Dressed like a blooming bride,
In all her beauty's pride.

Ah, whither? Who can see?
Or whose the prize some day?
Ask of the yellow bee
Where winds his airy way;
Ask Hope, with upturned eyes,
Where long-lost Eden lies.

FISCHER.

ALL SAD AND ALL ALONE

ALL sad and all alone,
Where'er I be,
Age, like a heavy stone,
Oppresses me.

My joys have flown away,
Love and sweet song;
Friends wont with me to stay
Are dead so long.

The past is full of sorrow
For loved ones gone;
When I look to the morrow,
I see no dawn.

Yet murmur not, — be brave;
Thou hast well done.
Like course of fleeting wave,
Man's race is run.

All Sad and All Alone

Behold the happy bird
  That sings and flies;
But when night's wings are stirred,
  His music dies.

He sleeps in sheltering tree,
  Beneath the sky,
Dreaming, from trouble free,
  While zephyrs sigh.

At break of the new day,
  On the bare ground
He lies, — hushed his sweet lay,
  His rest profound.

His brothers still will sing
  On the green bough;
Their song will cease to ring.
  Why grievest thou?

FRANKLE.

WHEREFORE?

ONCE we did love, — one fresh spring day,
So far away!
As fair and fleeting was the dream
As foam on stream.

But once together we did rest
On mountain crest;
And once I touched thy honey lips
Like bee that sips.

Ah! many years have hurried by;
And you and I,
Driven apart, never again
Have met since then.

Calmly I heard, 'mid wanderings wide,
Thou wast a bride;
But something now lays hold on me,
And I think of thee.

Wherefore?

Wherefore? I sit where bright lights shine,
And sparkling wine:
What has brought back, this wintry night,
Thy face to sight?

Of that spring day, perchance art thou
Dreaming e'en now;
Or — frightful thought! — has death's keen dart
Pierced thy sweet heart?

FRANZOS.

THE FAMILY BIBLE

THOU friend from childhood's spring,
Dear old brown folio,
What thoughts to me dost bring
From the sweet long ago!
Thou, whose pictorial world
To my delighted eyes
The wonders all unfurled
Of the far eastern skies.

Thou openedst for me
The gates of that fair zone,
And badst me look and see
What glories there are shown, —
New worlds where palm-trees stand,
And camels walk between,
Where 'mid the desert's sand
Bright oases are seen.

Thou broughtest to me near
The heroes great and wise,
Whom each inspired seer
Has painted for our eyes,

The Family Bible

With many a gentle maid
Of whom the Bible tells,
Standing in palm-tree shade
By Oriental wells.

The patriarchal life
So simple and so pure,
Where angels quell all strife
And families endure;
The herds to water led, —
All this before me shone,
When with low-bended head
I gazed thy pages on.

I seem to see thee still
There open on the chair;
Again my eyes upfill
Conning thy pictures rare.
Again I am a boy;
The years have ceased to be,
And glad fresh-hearted joy
Returns once more for me.

My mother still sits nigh
With patient face and mild,
And makes some soft reply
To questions of her child,

Giving the imaged scene
A meaning high and plain,
While father, with calm mien,
Content looks on us twain.

O Time, how fierce thy rage,
How cruel thou dost seem!
The Bible's pictured page,
Believing eyes' fresh gleam,
My parents, both so dear,
The pure, contented mind,
Childhood's sweet joy and cheer,
I nevermore shall find.

FREILIGRATH.

BEDOUIN LIFE

WERE I exiled from Mecca's gates,
Or born on Yemen's burning sand
Or where lone Sinai silent waits,
The sword had swung this strong right hand;

Or mounted on high-mettled steed
I had fled o'er Jethro's flaming plain;
Or while my herds in peace did feed,
In shade of burning bush had lain;

Or with my tribe at even-fall,
In quick-stretched and quick-folded tent,
Afire at inspiration's call,
My voice to martial strains had lent.

Then on my words raptured had hung
The people all of the whole land,
Swayed by the power of music's tongue,
And magic of the poet's wand.

In sooth, my hearers nomads are,
Who feel the desert's power and charm,
And when they see Simoon afar,
Prostrate, that it may pass nor harm;

Bedouin Life

Who live upon the horse's back,
  Save when they sit round desert well;
From Aden flee 'long pathless track
  To where the snowy mountains swell;

Who tireless watch through the long night,
  Beside their flocks, lying at rest,
And, like Chaldeans old, have sight
  Of wisdom in the stars expressed;

Who still vague whispers sometimes hear
  From rocky Sinai's cloven heights,
See phantoms of the desert steer
  The smoke-clouds in their wandering flights,

And through a sudden rift can catch
  The glowing of a heavenly face—
O men, whose brains like a struck match
  Upflare, ye are of mine own race.

O land of tents, of martial breed!
  O desert people, simple, brave!
Bedouin, thou art, upon thy steed,
  A poem such as poets crave.

I wander on a gloomy strand,—
  The North, ah! it is thrifty, cold;
I would I sang 'mid burning sand
  And of the bridle-reins had hold.

FREILIGRATH.

OH, LOVE SO LONG AS THOU CANST LOVE

OH, love so long as thou canst love;
Love while sweet love may still be thine.
The days will come, the days will come,
When thou beside sad graves shalt pine.

Let then thy heart be warm and true,
And cherish love, and love still bear,
While in the world another heart
Beats for thee with love's tender care.

If one opens his breast to thee,
For him do all that thou canst do,
Nor make for him one hour of gloom,
But all his days with joy renew.

And o'er thy tongue keep watchful guard;
Soon spoken is a word unkind.
O God, the thought was innocent;
But she has felt the biting wind.

Oh, love so long as thou canst love;
Love while sweet love may still be thine.
The days will come, the days will come,
When thou beside sad graves shalt pine.

Oh, Love so Long as Thou canst Love

Low-bending there, then thou shalt kneel,
And hide thy sorrow-laden eyes;
Her they shall never see again,
Who under the long dank grass lies.

Thou speakest: Oh, look down on me,
Whose tears here with thy dust are blent;
Forgive the wrongful word I spoke.
O God, the thought was innocent.

But she nor sees nor hears thee more,
To fond embrace shall never come;
The lips which thou so oft hast kissed,
Are silent and forever dumb.

Long since, thee, for thy bitter word,
She from a loving heart forgave,
Though many burning tears she shed.
Be calm; she sleeps well in her grave.

Oh, love so long as thou canst love;
Love while sweet love may still be thine.
The days will come, the days will come,
When thou beside sad graves shalt pine.

FREILIGRATH.

THE EMIGRANTS

I CANNOT turn from where ye stand,
O swarming throngs who crowd the shore,
And to the ship with busy hand,
Take eagerly your little store.

Ye men, who on broad shoulders bear
Baskets upfilled with German bread,
And climb the great ship's narrow stair
As though from hateful foes ye fled.

Black Forest maidens, tall and brown,
Wearing rich crown of braided hair,
Ye put your pots and pitchers down
Upon the clean-washed deck with care.

These are the pitchers, well I know,
Which oft ye filled at home's pure spring;
When where Missouri's waters flow,
What tender memories they will bring

Of stone-curbed village well, where you
In circles stood chatting at eve;
Of hearth-fires, round which friends so true
For your long absence still will grieve.

The Emigrants

Soon will they stand in the far West,
On wooden shelf of cottage bare;
Soon with some traveller seeking rest,
Their cool fresh water will they share.

From them will drink the Cherokee,
Athirst from hunt of buffalo;
No more the vintage will you see,
Or look on German wine's rich glow.

Oh, why are ye gone far away?
The Neckar Vale grows vine and corn;
Black Forest shade cools the warm day;
In Spessart sounds the Alpine horn.

'Mid primal forests you will long
To see again the German hills,
To hear the nightingale's rich song,
And music of your native rills.

What memories of the olden time
Will thronging float through your sad thought,
And, like some far-off Sabbath chime,
With yearning love and hope be fraught!

The ship weighs anchor; go in peace.
God guide its course and bless you all,
Your joy and happiness increase,
And on your fields make His rain fall!

FREILIGRATH.

HIGH ON MOUNT LEBANON, HARD BY A SPRING

HIGH on Mount Lebanon, hard by a spring,
A cedar lifts his branches to the sky;
Amidst them birds sing sweetest melody,
And thrill the air with happy carolling.

From the clear fount his strength the cedar draws,
To whom with limpid stream she vigor brings,
While he above her holds his shading wings;
Her sparkling wave more gladly flows because
Beneath the fragrant boughs its journey lies,
Which shield it from the heat of burning skies.

Here is fit image of two souls entwined
In wedlock, and by mutual love made one:
He saves her from the wasting fire of sun;
She feeds his heart with love in hers enshrined.

FRIEDMAN.

HOW FAIR ARE YE, O FRESH YOUNG GIRLS

HOW fair are ye, O fresh young girls,
With ruby lips and clear bright eyes,
With breath of kine and silken curls,
And dimples where boy Cupid lies.

How noble, too, are ye, brave youths,
Upon whose brows the future gleams,
Whose glowing cheeks the down still smoothes,
Whose thoughts and hopes are like sunbeams.

But none of you will I invite
To the charmed circle where I feast;
Ye have not seen the hallowing light
Which Memory sheds, — great Nature's priest.

GEIBEL.

WHERE'ER A HEART WITH TRUE LOVE GLOWS

WHERE'ER a heart with true love glows,
Oh, touch not, touch not rudely there;
Quench not the light of the pure flame;
To do such wrong let no man dare.

If anywhere in the wide world
An unprofaned spot is found,
It is in youth's all tender heart,
With first love's fragrant blossoms crowned.

Oh, grant him, then, his spring-time dream,
Filled with the odorous breath of flowers;
For know ye not, once it shall fade,
Never again bloom Eden's bowers.

Full many a heart has broken been
For love ruthlessly snatched away,
Or fallen with a voiceless grief,
To hate and hopelessness a prey.

And many who in secret bled,
  In utmost need aloud have cried,
And thrown themselves in the world's dust,
  When the fair god within them died.

Ah! ye may weep and sore lament;
  But never tears of bitter rue
Can give the withered rose its bloom,
  Or the dead heart's young life renew.

GEIBEL.

YEARNING

I LOOK on the world and I look in my heart,
Until from mine eyes the burning tears start;
Far distant I see the rich glowing light,
But still the North holds me in its dark night.
Oh, the world is so wide and the way so narrow,
And time fleets swift as arrow!

I know a land where, amidst sunny green,
The ripe grapes glow fallen columns between;
Where the deep blue waves on the shore sink down,
And for coming poets waits the laurel crown.
Sweetly smiling, it lures my yearning heart —
Ah! thither would I depart.

Oh, had I but wings to cleave the blue air,
How soon I would fly to that land so fair!
But, alas! the thronging hours pass by;
Lament thy dead youth, and let thy song die.
Oh, the world is so wide and the way so narrow,
And time fleets swift as arrow!

GEIBEL.

YE UNBELIEVERS, COME, LOOK ON THE SPRING

YE Unbelievers, come, look on the Spring!
See where the wood, a living temple, glows,
Whose heaven-seeking pillars upward fling
Their arches green, standing in stately rows.

Like incense, fragrance rises through the air;
The sun, a golden lamp, pours his rich light;
And in sweet harmony the hymn of prayer
Is chanted by the birds from leafy height.

The heavens bend, stooping to earth low down,
To weave their colors through the happy flowers,
While every being wears love's royal crown,
And feels the presence of the higher Powers.

Oh, say not, in your meaningless conceit,
You comprehend the boundless mystery,
And know it all to be a mere deceit, —
A clock whose works tell their own history!

Your words are vain and die upon the tongue,
While the whole earth is vocal with the praise
Of God; and every heart, again grown young,
The blessing drinks, and lives delightful days.

GEIBEL.

WITH RUNNING TIME I HASTEN, TOO

WITH running time I hasten, too,
And make nowhere a home;
Like winds I move the whole earth through,
And rest but when I roam.

Since nought with me can long abide,
To nought I bind my heart,
But warm my hands at each fireside,
Still ready to depart.

The Spring outblooms and quickly dies;
The flowers fade at eve;
My young heart's love in death now lies:
Therefore to nought I cleave.

Oh, cease, sweet friends, to bid me stay;
The earth itself rolls on.
How can my soul then make delay,
When all that comes is gone?

With hastening time I, too, must run,
Like rivers, onward flow;
And follow after setting sun —
Whither? Ah, who can show?

GEIBEL.

CEASE MOANING; QUIT THY IDLE LIFE

CEASE moaning; quit thy idle life;
Go forward with brave heart.
Be strong, and dare in noble strife;
Do like a man thy part.

Thou mayst not stay when the fair Time
With roses crowns thy head;
When sirens woo thee with soft rhyme,
To rest on downy bed.

Go forward; and let thy high song
Bear weight of the world's pain,
Till on thy cheek the hot tears throng,
Like showers of summer rain;

Till the thick-woven laurel crown
Enwreathe thy radiant brow,
And the pure flame of fair renown
With glory thee endow.

Still onward, through the ranks of foes,
Though death await thee there;
In heaven's way the thorn still grows;
Who win must greatly dare.

GEIBEL.

WHAT WE AYE LOVE, AYE WITH US WILL ABIDE

IF one whom thou dost love sinks in the grave,
Bear to some solitude thy voiceless woe;
Or with thy burden through lone forests go,
Or near the shore where moans the sad sea wave.

The lost will there come back to thee and lave
Thy soul with the sweet spirit's mystic glow,
As present felt in gentle winds that blow,
Till tears bring peace which sorrowing hearts most crave.

By death made beautiful he walks with thee,
Wearing the crown of the beatified,
And dearer now, as thine eternally;
Thus loving souls have their fair Eastertide
When from the grave they see the dead set free —
What we aye love, aye with us will abide.

GEIBEL.

OF PUREST JOY HE DRINKS HIS FILL

OF purest joy he drinks his fill,
Who walks before sunrise:
The woods are now as calm and still
As child that sleeping lies;
Yet dreaming is the lark;
The brook sings in the dark
Its sweet low melodies.

Now, like a book, the earth and sky,
With fair truth brimming o'er,
In many-tinted lines do lie,
And God is more and more;
All things both near and far,
With the fresh morning star,
Teach His high wisdom's lore.

Like incense prayer uprises now
Through the mild fragrant air,
And in the heart Love makes his vow,
Kneeling with head all bare,
Until, like fountain singing,
From his pure lips forth springing
Glad hymns his bliss declare.

Then suddenly the nightingale
  Pours out his happy song,
And hill and plain and secret vale
  The melody prolong;
The reddening sun's rich glow
Uplights the music's flow.
  Sing to the Lord, — All hail!

GEIBEL.

I LOVE TO WALK THE RISING MOON TO MEET

I LOVE to walk the rising moon to meet,
Through the hushed streets where solemn silence reigns,
Save that the fountain to the stones complains
Of too swift passing of Time's rapid feet.

Now holy night gives me her blessing sweet;
My troubled heart its sacred peace regains;
Fair love around me throws his golden chains,
And in my bosom takes his blissful seat.

The vanished days of my dead youth return,
And from my breast sweet mournful songs upflow,
Filled with calm thoughts of those for whom I yearn;
As from dark sea uprises the white row
Of swans, when from the wintry north they turn,
And southward fly where fragrant meadows blow.

GEIBEL.

GIVE ME BUT THE FOAM OF THE LIGHT WINE

GIVE me but the foam of the light wine,
But the beady foam alone;
Give me but the dream of love divine
For this life, which soon is flown.

Full draught let another drink, not me,
Who dwells in his home at rest;
But I, like a wanderer, must flee,
Not sit like a bird in nest, —

Must wander and roam the world around,
'Long a thousand winding ways,
Both over the land and seas profound,
Where the light of spring delays.

Wherever a pleading voice I hear,
That would bid me cease to fare,
And with those who love me take good cheer,
I sing him the same old air.

Give me but the foam of the light wine,
But the beady foam alone;
Give me but the dream of love divine
For this life, which soon is flown.

GEIBEL.

ONCE AS I ROSE AT BREAK OF DAY

ONCE as I rose at break of day,
Thinking the winter still was here,
The lark began to sing blithe lay,
Upfluttering through the heavens clear:
Tirili, tirili, no longer dream;
Dull sleeper, open thou thy eyes.
Behold, the spring with her bright gleam
Has stolen from the skies,
And looks about with glad surprise.

And as I cast an upward glance,
The ethereal blue swam full in view,
And trees and flowers seemed to dance
With joy, in leafy dress all new;
And when I listened to my heart,
There sat young Love all gayly singing,
As though he ne'er had felt a smart,
And the whole earth was ringing,
And life on every side was springing.

GEIBEL.

THE STARS

ARE stars the gentle lambs of God,
Which, frightened by the noisy day,
From the blue vault by angels trod,
Are shepherded 'neath night's mild sway?

Or are they mystic lilies white,
Which their fair leaves with love down bend,
To pour sweet slumber through the night,
And rest to weary workers send?

Or are they, in God's temple high,
The gleaming lamps uphung aloft,
When darkness gathers in the sky,
To shed on souls their radiance soft?

No; they are letters bright and pure,
With which the angels spell God's name,
In the infinite dome obscure,
Until it glows with love aflame.

GEIBEL.

NOW HILL AND DALE OUTBLOOM AGAIN

NOW hill and dale outbloom again,
The zephyrs bear life-giving rain,
And Beauty lifts her happy head:
I would be glad, but my heart is dead.

Friends row with merry stroke and light,
Upon the waters stars are bright,
And music o'er the waves is shed:
I would be glad, but my heart is dead.

The moon swims forth through the heavens bare,
Gay songs ring out in the balmy air,
And wine in the crystal cup is red:
I would be glad, but my heart is dead.

And though my love from out the grave
Should rise, with all the joy she gave,
Bringing again all that has fled,
Still past is past, and dead is dead.

GEIBEL.

AH! IT IS LONG SINCE I HAVE SUNG

AH! it is long since I have sung:
Full many moons have waxed and waned;
A dreary winter's frosts have hung
Like fetters on my soul, deep pained.

Much have I suffered, much have borne,
From biting tongues and bitter hearts,
Who, driven by base hate and scorn,
Have through my soul shot fiery darts.

And with their folly, my own sin
Has made compact to punish me:
But now, my heart, be still within,
The spring is come and thou art free.

The tender buds are green and soft,
The brooks outlaugh in merry song,
My happy soul is borne aloft;
Come, let us wander flowers among.

GEIBEL.

NOW WILL I HUSH EACH PLAINT AND SIGH

NOW will I hush each plaint and sigh,
The long, sad echo of my woe!
The day has dawned, the night must go,
The hour which brings relief is nigh.

No mournful numbers will I try;
In gleeful tones, O song, upflow,
Like lark's which scatters here below
The happy notes that thrill the sky.

Come forth adorned for feast and dance,
With flowers and with gladness crowned;
Let music rich all hearts entrance,
And let the merry laugh ring round.
For Spring looks down with rainbow glance,
And in my heart sweet voices sound.

GEIBEL.

IN WOODS, WHEN THE SUN IS SHINING BRIGHT

IN woods, when the sun is shining bright,
And the purple buds with joy forth spring,
It is my heartfelt deep delight
To sing.

What I have known of joy and pain,
Awake or dreaming at my ease,
I tell alone in tuneful strain
The trees.

And they the words I sing well know;
The leafy boughs themselves give ear,
And with a gentle rustle show
They hear.

My song is borne on airy wing,
Through dells and over hills away,
And glad sweet-throated birds re-sing
My lay.

Then through my soul the echoes throng
Of all divinest melodies;
O pleasant air, O songs among
The trees.

GEIBEL.

SO LONG THROUGH VALES AND MOUNTAINS HIGH

SO long through vales and mountains high
I've wandered mile on mile,
And now at rest I long to lie,
While dreams my soul beguile.

But wheresoe'er I knock and ask
For leave to sit me down,
A loveless voice takes me to task,
Forbidding with a frown.

Here is there naught that thou canst do,
No place for thee to rest;
Therefore away, nor longer sue, —
All poets are a pest.

. . . . . .

But, though the world despise my song,
To me at least 't is sweet,
Dear as the stars which heaven throng,
Or words that lovers repeat.

It is my sky, it is my air,
Where with delight I fly;
It is my fragrant rosebush fair
Whose branches I uptie.

It is my spring when far and wide
The leaves of autumn fall,
And, when the winds of winter chide,
It is my welcome hall.

And but for it the month of May
To me would not be dear,
For Love himself would flee away,
And all the world be drear.

And when my song in silence dies,
Lay me in quiet grave,
For else is nothing which supplies
The joy and bliss it gave.

GEIBEL.

THE POET SITS WITH MAGIC WAND

THE poet sits with magic wand
Upon his mountain throne,
And looks upon both sea and land,
And sees from zone to zone.

To his high song must tribute pay
All that on earth is best,
Must at his feet their treasures lay
Remotest east and west.

By crystal fountains, springing clear,
He sees the palm-tree rise,
And fragrant linden alleys near
The modest violet spies.

If he but nod, the rose will bare
Her beauty to his sight,
And lotus-bloom through silvery air
Will greet the soft moonlight.

The Poet Sits with Magic Wand

Through blackest mine he makes his way,
  Dives into ocean deep,
Where gleams the ruby's crimson ray,
  Where pearls in darkness sleep.

He gives the swan its dying note,
  The bird its flute-like trill,
And through his song the glories float
  Which morn and evening fill.

The abyss's hoarse eternal roar
  He echoes back again,
The stars which stud the heavenly floor
  Join in the godlike strain.

All things obey his mighty power
  And hail him as their king,
While he his high and royal dower
  To some fair child doth bring.

GEIBEL.

THE LILY BLOOMS ALL FAIR

THE lily blooms all fair,
The leaf kisses the rose,
And through the balmy air
My dream of beauty glows.

The flowers, bending low,
Greet me with gentle eye;
The nightingales forego
Their songs while I pass by.

My heart grows calm and still
In this serenest night;
At rest is my weak will;
Dead love awakes to sight.

A voice from the deep sky
I seem almost to hear;
Methinks 't were sweet to die,
God's heaven is so near.

GEIBEL.

A POET BORN

ON whom the Muse has turned her loving eye,
Is a born poet and will so remain,
Despite or fate or matter's soulless reign,
However late his song fall from the sky.

The many devious paths that round him lie,
Pointing to wealth and place, allure in vain.
He hears the echo of diviner strain,
And dreaming walks, till he with wings may fly.

When Spring steps forth her new-blown flowers among,
His heart is thrilled by her fair beauty's glow;
When Love looks up, he cannot hush his song,
But, like a fount from the deep earth below,
His notes break forth in sweet, melodious throng,
And the new singer now all men shall know.

GEIBEL.

HAPPY THOUGHTS

AND why should I not hold most dear
This earthly life of mine,
Where hope dispels the gloom of fear
As stars in darkness shine?
If Time brings sorrow in his train,
He brings sweet pleasure too;
A moment's joy whole years of pain
Will banish quite from view.

Learn but to seize the goddess fair
When smiling she goes by;
In thy own heart and everywhere
Seek her through earth and sky.
And if mishap should come to thee,
Know it will pass away;
Laugh, then, in face of misery,
Thinking of better day.

Happy Thoughts

Let not dull sorrow stay with thee;
  Put far away all grief;
If sadness come, oh, quickly flee
  To song for sweet relief.
The gentle muse will lead thee on
  Through the dark night's deep gloom,
Till gleams in the gray east the dawn,
  And brighter worlds upbloom.

GEIBEL.

THE BITTER WORLD'S SORE FRET

THE bitter world's sore fret
With anguish fills my breast;
I will it all forget,
And in deep woods find rest.

A long farewell I take,
Sad pleasures all forsake,
A hermit I will make,
The wilderness my guest.

This garb, so rich and gay,
Is now all worthless grown;
My sword I put away,
All vanity disown.

Fly, falcon, into space,
Gone is the maddening chase;
Run on, O steed, thy race,
For I must be alone.

A little cottage here
In shadow of the trees
Shall seem to me more dear
Than palace's soft ease.

The crucifix shall be
My only company,
And I shall live as free
As the fresh morning breeze.

In hollow of the tree
Wild honey will I take,
And herbs enough there be
Simple repast to make.

A limpid spring close by,
Upbubbling to the sky,
Cool waters will supply
My healthful thirst to slake.

A garden, too, shall lie
Quite near my cottage door,
Where I sweet task will ply,
And count my flowers o'er ;

And in my heart the while
Shall think of all the guile
That lurks in love's soft smile,
Which me shall grieve no more.

And should there come to me
Perchance a timid deer,
He shall be company,
And give me pleasant cheer, —

Shall lie beside my bed,
And from my hand be fed,
More grateful for his bread
  Than man, and more sincere.

So will I lead my life
  With nature all alone,
Far from the hate and strife
  Of men, who curse and moan.

At foot of cross will lay
My burden, and will pray,
With yearning heart, each day,
  "Lord, take me for Thine own."

And if God hear my prayer
  The wood shall be my grave;
Above, in the cool air,
  Green boughs shall gently wave,

And pale wild-roses bloom
In the dim, sober gloom;
And all about my tomb
  Deep silence would I crave.

GEIBEL.

A LEGEND OF THE RHINE

ON the Rhine, on the pleasant Rhine,
How fair is a spring night,
When the vine-clad hills all shine
In the moon's soft silvery light:

Then the hills and vines among,
A form glides gently on,
At his side a sword is hung,
His crown is like the dawn.

It is Charlemagne the king,
Who with a mighty hand,
His sceptre once did swing
O'er all the German land.

From his grave uprisen now,
He walks along the Rhine,
And he blesses every bough
That promises rich wine.

A Legend of the Rhine

Close by Rudesheim moonlight
A bridge o'er the water weaves,
And it glows through the deep night
Like sunshine on the leaves.

And here Charlemagne walks o'er,
Passing with certain tread;
His blessings on either shore
Upon the vine are shed.

He returns again to Aix
And in his grave down lies,
Till the coming spring awakes
Him with her joyful cries.

Then here 's health to heroes great
Who, in the German land,
Have upbuilt the noble state
With strong and fearless hand.

GEIBEL.

THIS IS THE DARKSOME MYSTERY

THIS is the darksome mystery
Which fills my heart with sorrow, —
That we nor joy nor misery
Can feel beyond the morrow.

However deep the pain we bear,
In inmost soul though lying,
The birds sing out, the day is fair,
And straight we hush our sighing.

However sweet the bliss we taste
A moment all will swallow,
Our Paradise becomes a waste,
And what we love is hollow.

And knowing this I scarcely know
Which is the keener sorrow:
That all our griefs so quickly go,
Or joys have no to-morrow.

GEIBEL.

WITH DISTANT DYING THUNDER TONE

WITH distant, dying thunder tone
The storm has fled away,
And over the moist earth is thrown
The sun's bright golden ray.

With what pure eyes the flowers look round,
How blithely the brook sings;
With what glad drops the leaves are crowned,
How freshly the corn springs!

My soul, behold the boundless green,
And all the beauty here,
And see thy own sweet youth's fair mien
When life was full and clear.

Touch not thy lyre; be hushed thy song,
While vocal is the spring;
With richer music her notes throng
Than aught that thou canst sing.

GEIBEL.

DEEP DARKNESS, LIKE AN INKY VEIL

DEEP darkness, like an inky veil,
Falls on the dying day;
The rising sun let others hail,
But I love not his ray.

My eye for a far distant shore
Through deepening twilight peers;
A single star, from heaven's door,
Looks on my blinding tears.

A saintly face, white as the moon,
With yearning turns to me;
Where she has gone I follow soon,
Into eternity.

GEIBEL.

LIKE A FAIR MAIDEN BLISS IS COY

LIKE a fair maiden bliss is coy,
Intangible as air:
Thou huntest round the earth for Joy,
And findest him nowhere.

Lie rather on the fragrant grass
And sing thy merry lay,
And then perchance thou 'lt see him pass,
Or even near thee stay.

Then take him quick and hold him fast,
Nor speak a word the while,
Else fleet as thought he will have passed
Ere thou hast caught his smile.

GEIBEL.

SONG OF THE SPINNING WHEEL

HUM, O hum, my spinning wheel,
Turn ever without rest:
For shrouds and birth-clothes thread I reel,
And for the bridal vest.

O golden thread, who can foretell
What fortune shall be thine,
Whether with joy or grief to dwell,
The quick or dead to twine.

Beginning is not like the end,
Nor hope like deed that 's done;
What we for marriage feast intend
For mourning veil is spun.

Hum, my wheel, hum thy sad song;
As swift as thou life flies,
And he who laughing thinks it long,
Looks round and weeping dies.

Song of the Spinning Wheel

Mid clouds the sun sinks into night,
And joy flees like the wind;
How can a thread so fine and slight
Truth and sweet love fast bind!

Hum, O hum, my spinning wheel,
Turn ever without rest:
O flowing tears, my soul anele,
Give peace to my sad breast.

GEIBEL.

DEEPEST STILLNESS ON THE WATER

DEEPEST stillness on the water,
Motionless is all the sea;
Far and near beholds the sailor
Smoothness stretch infinitely.

Not a breath from any quarter,
Deathlike calmness in the air,
On the boundless waste of water
Not a stir is anywhere.

GOETHE.

THROUGH WOODS I WENT

THROUGH woods I went
Without a thought;
On nothing bent
I nothing sought.

In shade I spied
A little flower,
As star bright-eyed,
Fresh as a shower.

To pluck it I stooped;
A soft voice said,
While the flower drooped,
"When plucked I 'm dead."

I dug it then,
And took it straight
To leafy glen
Close to my gate.

Now planted there
In quiet nook,
It thrills the air
With its sweet look.

GOETHE.

DELIGHTFUL DAYS

DELIGHTFUL days,
Are ye come again?
The sun's warm rays
Clothe height and plain.

All gleeful flow
The laughing rills
Through green meadow
And twixt the hills.

O balmy air,
Celestial heights,
What sounds I hear
And see what sights!

The glad birds sing
Amid the trees,
Their blithe songs bring
Most dear heart's-ease.

In fragrant bowers,
The yellow bees,
Spend all the hours
The bloom to tease.

Delightful Days

They hum and fly
  On busy wing,
Their sweet task ply,
  And working sing.

The fishes swim
  In waters bright,
Throw shadows dim
  In their quick flight.

The zephyr's wings
  Shed fragrance there;
The soft wind sings
  To the fainting air,

Or gently dies
  Upon my breast,
Where now it lies
  Like child at rest.

O joy, O peace,
  O Muses dear,
May never cease
  Your presence here!

GOETHE.

PEACE

O THOU who from Thy heavenly height
Beholdest every pain and grief,
And where souls pine in blackest night
Dost ever send most sweet relief;
Shall I from erring never cease?
What purpose serve my joy and sorrow?
O holy Peace,
Let me thy secret of thee borrow!

In highest things
Is peace;
E'en zephyr's wings
There cease
The flowers to woo,
And birds their songs forget:
Wait but a moment yet
And thou 'lt rest too.

GOETHE.

DAYS THAT ARE DEAD

WHO will bring the beautiful days,
The days of my first love?
Who will bring but a single hour
From that fair time again?

Solitary I nurse my wound
And with ever renewed lament
Grieve over my long lost bliss:
Who will bring the beautiful days,
Those fairest days again?

GOETHE.

WHAT WRITE THE WAVES

WHAT write the waves on sandy shore?
They write their bitter suffering,
Their coming, parting evermore,
From resting-place where they would cling.

And I look out upon the sea, —
My fondest hope, my love's pure joy,
On shifting sands all written be
In lines the next wave will destroy.

GOTTSCHALL.

A FREEBORN PEOPLE HEARD IN ANCIENT TIMES

A FREEBORN people heard, in ancient times,
The muse of Æschylus and Sophocles,
With heavenly strength and godlike power to please,
In loftiest strains rehearse heroic rhymes.

O happy poets, in delightful climes,
To whom the people's voice pure fame decrees,
Round whom they gather in glad companies
To mingle praise with merit's nobler chimes.

Ye modern bards, who of such triumphs hear
Unwillingly, how little ye are free
In thought or deed, how narrow is your sphere
Of faith and hope, how small is what you see!
Yet wait not till the o'ercast sky grow clear, —
Lead on, however dark the days may be.

GOTTSCHALL.

BESIDE A DEEP WOOD LIES

BESIDE a deep wood lies
A flowery meadow green,
Where, under azure skies,
A fair maid may be seen.

She with her sickle goes
In circles o'er the plain,
And in her fancy mows
The flowers, singing soft strain.

The cuckoo all day cries
Still deeper in the wood,
And in his sweet replies
She hears omen of good.

GREIF.

AH! NOWHERE CAN I LONG ABIDE

AH! nowhere can I long abide,
All restless is my heart;
The clouds and winds and waves on-glide,
And so must I depart.

In autumn, when the swallows fly,
Deep longing fills my soul,
Around about me voices cry;
I hear the years on roll.

When wanderers leave their homes behind
With them in thought I go;
When I my heart to men would bind
I think of parting's woe.

From what I most have yearned to see
I straightway turn again;
If I must live I must be free,
Nor even wear love's chain.

The soul to which my own would cling
Trembles, as I, with dread;
And so I roam, like guilty thing,
Homeless till I be dead.

GREIF.

THE NEW TANNHÄUSER

GLEAMING 'mid the linden boughs,
Where the nightingales are singing,
My old church-tower's cross I see,
Blessings on the people flinging;

And with moistening eyes remember —
Ah! what years have since gone by! —
How, before the altar kneeling,
A believing child prayed I.

Every Sunday there I met
Her whom my young heart adored,
And the good old priest at last
Gave the blessing we implored.

Long it was ago, — meantime,
I, with worldly wisdom filled,
In my knowing, cunning brain,
God, the dear good God, have killed.

The New Tannhäuser

Gods unto ourselves we are,
  And none other will confess,
We, the Spirit of the All,
  We, the heart of all success.

To the narrow church of stone
  Preacher's voice can lure no more,
But, of thee, O my sweet love,
  Bells are vocal as of yore.

And a veil draws o'er my eyes,
  When, as in my youth's fair prime,
Peaceful 'mid the linden boughs
  I behold the church-tower climb.

GRISEBACH.

FALL FAST, O PATTERING RAIN, FALL FAST

FALL fast, O pattering rain, fall fast,
Awake again the slumbering dreams
Of childish days, too sweet to last,
With all their many-tinted gleams,

When in the sultry summer hours,
Upon the parched and thirsty earth,
Poured down thy cool refreshing showers,
And drooping corn rose glad as mirth.

What sweetest pleasure then to stand
With naked feet in the lush grass,
And catch the drops in outstretched hand,
Or watch the airy bubbles pass!

Like mothers' kisses on the cheek
The sweet, delightful waters fell,
And we, with merry laugh and shriek,
Felt new life in our bosoms swell.

Fall Fast, O Pattering Rain, Fall Fast

Like flower-cups upturned to the sky
  Our happy souls stood open there,
To drink the zephyr's fragrant sigh
  And balm of the delicious air.

Each trembling drop that showered down
  Brought gladness to the inmost heart,
As though all sorrow it would drown
  And give to life a fresher start.

Fall fast, O pattering rain, bring now
  The merry songs which then we sang,
Standing beneath the dripping bough
  Till all the woods with music rang.

Ah! would that I again might hear
  The rain's moist rustle round my head,
Sweet as are thoughts of all the dear
  Who lie in their cool, earthy bed.

GROTH.

DEATH'S PURIFYING POWER

WHEN comes the day from trouble free,
The hour of perfect pure delight?
Not now, nor will it come for thee, —
It has already taken flight.
What we have lost seems good and fair,
While what we have lacks power to please;
The present good we do not seize,
But wait till it has flown elsewhere.

Where is the man, the blameless one,
Whom every virtue marks her own?
His faults, like blots on the fair sun,
If he is near are clearly shown;
But when he goes, nor comes again,
He seems all noble and all brave, —
Till he lies safe within the grave
His real worth is never plain.

The farthest is the fairest still,
By distance clothed in softest light;
The stars owe their high power to thrill
To their far off infinite flight;

And the blest days of youth are sweet
When in the past they buried lie,
Hidden from all, save memory's eye,
Where hope and faithful love still meet.

See where in many a billowy mound
Yon graveyard lies on the hillside,
Waves of a dark sea and profound,
Which so much love forever hide;
They wash all sin and stain away,
And when thy soul looks in the deep
It feels: "Here too shall I soon sleep
And cleansing waters round me play."

GRÜN.

THE GRAVEYARD BY THE SEA

IN distant land, high over the sea,
Upborne on rocks to the sky,
A graveyard lies which all may see
Who in great white ships sail by.

There on the green grass rests stone by stone
Under the primeval trees,
And many a legend's whispered tone
Is heard in the sighing breeze.

There linger the angels of the dead,
Hovering o'er the silent field,
And a sentinel stands with bended head,
In his hand a golden shield.

There truth and love all calmly sleep,
From the homes of men long fled,
And the evening star looks out from the deep
With smiles on their mossy bed.

Year in and year out sad time onflies,
With his burden all wearily,
But eternal sunshine sleeping lies
On this graveyard by the sea.

HAUSHOFER.

FAR DISTANT I BEHOLD

FAR distant I behold
The city and its towers
Gleaming with sunset gold,
In midst of fragrant bowers.

The freshening breeze moves o'er
The gently flowing stream;
My boat with its sad rower
Glides on as in a dream.

The sun uplifts again
His head sinking to rest,
And points far o'er the plain
To her I love the best.

HEINE.

OF AZRA'S TRIBE

THE Sultan's daughter, radiant fair,
Day after day in evening air
Walked near a fountain springing
To hear the waters singing.

A youthful slave stood day by day
Close to the fountain's silvery spray,
And watched the waters flowing,
His face still paler growing.

The princess drew one evening near,
And spoke to him in accents clear:
"Thy name and kindred tell,
And home where thou dost dwell."

"Mohammed," said he, "is my name,
And Yemen is the home I claim,
Of Azra's tribe am I,
Who when they love must die."

HEINE.

THE LORELEY

WHY I am sad I cannot tell;
A legend of the olden time
Rings in my heart like far-off bell,
And thrills me with its solemn rhyme.

The day stoops low, the air is chill,
And silent flows the darkling Rhine,
Upon the brow of vineclad hill
The rays of setting sun soft shine.

High on the rocks a maiden fair
Sits all alone, as angel bright;
She sits and combs her golden hair,
While day is sinking into night.

She combs her hair with golden comb,
And sings the while a sweet, sad song,
Which floats away as the flecking foam
Is borne by flowing wave along.

The Loreley

The boatman drifting in a dream
  Glides on, and thrills with wildest pain;
The rocks he sees not in the stream,
  Enchanted by that plaintive strain.

The wave I ween will swallow soon
  The boatman in his reverie,
The Loreley in her witching tune
  Sings with the voice of destiny.

HEINE.

WE SAT CLOSE TO THE FISHER'S DOOR

WE sat close to the fisher's door
And looked out on the sea;
The evening fog drew to the shore
And rose along the lea.

The lighthouse threw its lonely glare
Across the darkling tide,
And through the dusk of evening air
A ship was seen to glide.

We spoke of wave and storm and wreck,
Of sailors and their life
Passed on the ever-moving deck,
With death and danger rife:

We spoke of distant lands and isles,
Which lay north, south, east, west,
Of uncouth men and savage wiles,
And all that may be guessed.

We Sat Close to the Fisher's Door

On Ganges' banks rich fragrance lies,
  And giant trees uploom,
While peaceful men lift calmest eyes
  To the fair lotus bloom.

In Lapland man is low desire,
  Wide mouths, flat heads and small;
They chew and chatter round the fire;
  This of their life is all.

The young girls listened most intent,
  Then silence softly fell;
The ship with darkness soon was blent;
  We rose and said farewell.

HEINE.

THE OCEAN GLEAMED LIKE MOLTEN GOLD

THE ocean gleamed like molten gold
Beneath the setting sun:
She sat and looked pensive and cold,
As silent as a nun.

The fog rose on the swelling tide,
The sea-gull onward passed,
And I, sweet love, sat by thy side
And saw thy tears fall fast.

I saw them fall upon thy hand,
And I, on bended knee,
Stooped low, and drank from that white hand
The tears that flowed for me.

And from that hour no peace I find,
But of sheer longing die;
Those tears have made me wholly blind,
To death have brought me nigh.

HEINE.

JOY IS A GAY, LIGHT-HEARTED MAID

JOY is a gay, light-hearted maid,
Who in one place will never stay;
She comes to thee like one afraid,
Gives but a kiss and flies away.

Dame Sorrow constant is and true,
And presses thee close to her heart;
When thou wouldst flee she will pursue,
Nor ever from thee will depart.

HEINE.

THE FIR-TREE AND THE PALM

ON northern hill a fir-tree stands,
And slumbers all alone;
Winter round him his icy bands
And mantle white has thrown.

He dreams of oriental palm,
Who, on her rocky seat,
All solitary mourns and calm
Amid the desert's heat.

HEINE.

MUSIC OF SPRING

SWEETLY through my soul now ring
The peals of silvery bells.
Ring, O ring, music of spring,
Which in my heart deep dwells.

Send your tones through azure air
To where the flowers blow,
And if by a rose they fare
Say I my greeting throw.

HEINE.

IN BEAUTIFULLEST MONTH OF MAY

IN beautifullest month of May,
When all the flowers bloom,
Love on my heart his head did lay, —
I caught his breath's perfume.

In beautifullest month of May,
When all the woodlands ring,
I told her all my heart would say
While birds were carolling.

HEINE.

HOPE'S CROWN

HEART, my heart, still wear Hope's crown;
Despite all fate may bring
Love that died in winter's frown
Will live again in spring.

Think of all that still is thine,
And of the world so fair;
Heart, my heart, do not repine,
But seek love everywhere.

HEINE.

WHEN I PASS BY THY HOUSE

WHEN I pass by thy house
In the fresh morning air,
Pure joy, O little maid,
I feel at sight of thee.

With thy deep, black-brown eyes
Inquiring thou dost gaze:
"Who art, and what ails thee,
O strange and suffering man?"

A German poet am I,
Well known in German land;
Who speaks the noblest names
Mine also will he speak.

What ails me, little maid?
Much ails in German land;
Who tells the bitterest woe
Mine also he will tell.

HEINE.

LOVE'S SOLACE

WHEN I the song again
Hear which my sweet love sang,
My heart is cleft in twain
By sorrow's bitter pang.

Then yearning deep drives me
To yon lone mountain height:
Through tears I there grow free,
And of my love lose sight.

HEINE.

SACRED BEAUTY

A TENDER flower thou art,
So fragrant, fair, and mild;
Looking on thee, my heart
Grows heavy, O my child.

My hand upon thy head
I fain would place, and pray
That God may blessings shed
To keep thee pure alway.

HEINE.

IF THE LITTLE FLOWERS KNEW

IF the little flowers knew
The deep wound of my heart,
They would shed sweet tears of rue
To still the bitter smart.

If the nightingales did know
How sick and sad I am,
Their tenderest notes would flow
To me like healing balm.

If the golden stars could see
My hopeless woe and grief,
Through the heavens they would flee
To bring me blest relief.

But none of them can know,
One only knows my pain;
She has wrought me all my woe
And cleft my heart in twain.

HEINE.

UPON THE WINGS OF SONG

UPON the wings of song
I bear thee on, my sweet,
To Ganges' banks along,
And love's hidden retreat.

There a blooming garden lies,
Bathed in the moon's soft light,
And the yearning lotus sighs
For her dear sister's sight.

The violets whisper and kiss,
And gaze on the starry sheen;
The roses tell their bliss
The fragrant leaves between.

Meek-eyed gazelles draw nigh
And list to what they say;
The sacred waves roll by
And murmur on their way.

There we to earth shall sink
Beneath the palm-tree's shade,
And love and peace shall drink
And dream, of naught afraid.

HEINE.

THE DEWDROP AND THE WAVE

TO a Dewdrop bright a Wave made speech:
"Come, follow me upon my way;
I 'll bear thee on until we reach
The ocean, where the billows play."

The Dewdrop answered, whispering low:
"No! better to be here alone
Than rolling on in restless flow,
'Mid myriad drops a drop unknown.

"Glide past me, then, in thy quick flight;
I die within the rose's breast,
Which in some lover's hand this night
Shall droop with fragrance, — fate most blest.

"In vain ye lure me from this bed:
Here is my bliss, — for rest is bliss."
The Wave, then mocking, onward fled
To perish in the sea's abyss.

HERWEGH.

HEARTS MUST BLEED ERE THEY CAN DIE

WOULD I might fade like hues of evening sky
When weary day sinks into restful night!
O bliss, to dream, to swoon, and so to die,
To fall asleep in God, as wanes the light!

Would I, like a fair star, might pass away,
With brightness unobscured, to other sphere,
And, calm and painless, end my little day,
Dropping through azure heaven's boundless mere!

Would I might perish like the flower's breath,
Which from the fragrant petals softly steals,
And on the quiet air is borne to death
Like incense rising while the organ peals!

Would I might vanish like the morning dew,
When thirsty day looks on the glistering plain,
Sucked up by God into the infinite blue,
With all my hopes and all life's little gain!

Hearts Must Bleed ere they Can Die

Would I might float away like viewless tone
  Which makes escape from viol's trembling strings,
And, from its narrow prison scarcely flown,
  In the creator's breast in music sings!

Thou shalt not fade like hues of evening sky;
  Not like a star to rest shalt calmly sink;
Not like the flower's perfume shalt thou die;
  No morning ray thy life, like dew, shall drink.

Yet shalt thou pass nor leave a trace behind;
  But many sorrows first thy soul shall try;
To other things remorseless death is kind,
  But human hearts must bleed ere they can die.

HERWEGH.

O FRIENDS OF MINE, UPHANG WHEN I AM DEAD

O FRIENDS of mine, uphang when I am dead
This little harp, above the altar there,
Where hang so many wreaths just overhead
Of gentle maids who died when spring was fair.

The sexton then to travellers will show
This little harp with ribbons red entwined,
Which fall and float in peaceful rhythmic flow
Beneath the golden chords in evening wind.

And oft, so he shall tell, at sunset hour
The strings with tenderest melody do thrill,
And children playing near in fragrant bower
Behold the wreaths tremble and then grow still.

HOLTZ.

FLOWN AWAY

FLOWN away,
Far away,
The birds from the nest:
Naked walls,
Deserted halls,
Mourn the vanished guest.

Olden times,
Forgotten rhymes,
Like ghosts rise again:
Where now thy joy,
Thy heart of boy?
Doth nothing remain?

Silvery bells
Through deep dells
Ring out as of yore;
Flee then, quickly flee,
Lest the spider see
Thy tears brimming o'er.

HEYSE.

MY SOUL, THOU FLOATEST FAR

MY soul, thou floatest far
Through ether pure,
When gleams the morning star
O'er hill and moor.

The golden clouds uprise
To cool thy brow,
Where, winnowing the wide skies,
Thou glidest now.

Through deep abysmal space
Thy wing flies on,
Contending in the race
With the swift dawn.

The suns around thee move,
Circling 'mid light,
Sweeping in ringing groove
Through heaven's height.

My Soul, Thou Floatest Far

Again thou droppest down
To the sweet earth,
Wearing the blooming crown
Of love and mirth;

And like a creeping vine
Thou climbest now,
Thy tendrils to entwine
Round fragrant bough.

With all thy poverty
What wealth is thine!
With all thy misery
Thou art divine.

Canst thou, with joys like these,
My soul, be sad?
When heaven and earth both please,
Why not be glad?

HEYSE.

LAURELLA

LAURELLA, thou art wild and coy,
But to thy mother tame;
Thou knowest naught of the sad joy
And madness of love's flame.

How free thy hair floats in the breeze!
Thy eyelashes droop low,
Nor man nor maiden ever sees
The thoughts that 'neath them glow.

Thy teeth, fresh ruby lips between,
As snow are gleaming white;
And now, like a young gypsy queen,
Dancing thou takest flight.

If some rude boy but look on thee
Thy cheek with crimson glows;
If he but speak straight thou dost flee,
As pale as the primrose.

HEYSE.

THE BROOK

OUTLAUGHING with delight,
The brook goes rushing by,
Swift as an eagle's flight
Athwart the azure sky;
Its dream is of the sea;
O'er locks and dams, in glee,
It leaps with joyful cry.

But down in yonder vale
There waits a strong-built mill;
Its struggles naught avail,
For, do whate'er it will,
It has a master found
Whose corn must all be ground,
E'en though the waters spill.

Lo now the headlong brook
Has quiet grown and mild;
Lingering in many a nook
It is no more beguiled
By thought of worlds afar,
But mirrors some fair star,
Or face of gentle child.

HEYSE.

SONGS OF THE DYING

I.

AND again the fair sun gleams,
And the meadows bloom again,
And the fleecy summer clouds
Sail athwart the deep-blue main.

I lie out here on the green,
And upward look through the trees;
Their boughs are stirred with music,
While the birds sing and the bees.

But to me their twitter and hum
Bring no more the joy they brought:
"Have ye come to sing farewell,
O Nature's sweet choirs, self-taught?"

Who drinks of the foam of the cup
Of the dregs must taste at last;
Who throws to the breeze his sail
Must look on the broken mast.

So will I, without complaint,
  Pay the debt which we all owe;
But who can hope abandon,
  If hope still smile on his woe?

My love is sitting beside me
  With solace seeking to cheer;
But she turns away to weep;
  Then good-bye, fair world, death 's near.

II.

Through the open window now
  The summer's sweet breath is blown,
As gentle as mother's hand
  Caressing her child, — her own.

The birds which the winter's frost
  Taught travel to southern skies
Build under my roof again,
  And sing their blithe melodies.

But the friends whom travel lures
  Are wandering east and west;
Ah, could I wander with them,
  I were all too deeply blest.

So often I roamed as I list,
Nor knew the heavenly boon;
Vain wishes now must teach me
All that I lost in life's noon.

Oh, if on my loved one's arm
I might walk in the garden shade,
Might look on the flowers in bloom,
And scent the furrows fresh made.

And oh for a breath of the woods,
Of the cool moist woods once more!
What idle wishes awaken
When death awaits at the door!

III.

And I thought I could trust myself
That the victory was quite won,
But here steals hope's faintest ray,
And again I am undone.

As the worm to the blade of grass
Clings amidst the hurrying stream,
So clings love of life to hope,
Though akin to despair it seem.

O spirit undimmed, be strong,
So canst thou conquer all dread;
Thou 'rt able, I almost believe,
From sleep to awaken the dead.

IV.

Round about was cloud-becurtained night,
And amid'st the darkness and the dread
I could hear the secret tread
Of morning, bringing eternal light.

Lo, on the black mantle is seen
A star's soft silvery sheen:
Little star, little star, showest thou the way
To heaven's pure day?

Or leadest thou me to sorrow again,
Leadest again through life's narrow glen?
Whatever befall, at least thou art,
Star of Hope, life's better part.

HOLSTEIN.

THE PLOUGHMAN SITS IN HIS CABIN'S QUIET SHADE

THE ploughman sits in his cabin's quiet shade;
Within, his cheery hearth-fire brightly burns;
The traveller hears the evening bell
Sound sweet as voice of one we love.

The restful haven weary sailors gain,
The city's busy hum in silence dies,
In peaceful homes love lights his lamp,
And happy hearts accordant beat.

What would I have? the life of man is toil,
And the reward of work is grateful rest;
Why, then, must I forever seek
Repose, and seek it still in vain?

In morning sky fair spring's sweet face is seen,
The roses bloom in that bright golden world;
O purple cloud, take me, take me
To your pure sphere of perfect peace,

That all my love and grief may run to light!
Ah! foolish prayer! see how the charm has fled,
While darkness gathers everywhere,
And I am left alone with night.

Come, then, O gentle sleep, too much the heart
Desires: soon youth itself will fade away
With all its fond and feverish dreams,
And age will make me calm and wise.

HÖLDERLIN.

I STAND UPON THE SHORE WITH THEE, MY CHILD

I STAND upon the shore with thee, my child,
In the obscurity of dying day,
And listen to the moanings sad and wild
Of waves, while thou seest but the star's pure ray.

Like the dark ocean which before me lies,
And wails and sobs, as in infinite pain,
To heedless winds and to deaf, lowering skies,
The life of man is sombre, restless, vain.

Like the bright star which glistens through the night
And is most radiant in the midst of gloom,
Unquenchable in darkness infinite,
Thy soul I see as fair as dewy bloom.

But I, alas! still hear the moaning sea
Which bears upon its waves all human kind
In aimless tossings and uncertainty,
Victims of fear and doubt and fortune blind.

Whither, O whither, are they sailing all,
A soul upon each swelling billow's crest,
As full of life as though they heard God's call,
And onward to eternal glory pressed?

Hearken their mingled cries resounding far;
They knowledge seek, or wealth or love or fame,
And eager stand like coursers in the car,
And all intent like gamblers at their game.

Whither, O whither, are they sailing all?
To lands whose rivers run with golden sand?
To isles where lovers dream o'er waterfall?
To fields where glory crowns her sacred band?

Alas! I hear life's sobbing ocean moan,
And its deep voice is hoarse with all despair,
As in its gloomy waves, with dying groan,
Poor mortals sink with all their weight of care.

Not to the land which gleams with golden sand,
Not to the isles where happy lovers rest,
Not to the fields where glory crowns her band,
Do they sail on, O hapless souls unblest.

From all its depths unfathomed life's sea cries
In dull, unvarying voice, hoarse with despair,
That whosoever lives next moment dies,
An empty bubble bursting in the air.

I Stand upon the Shore with Thee

The flower that blooms, the ship that sails the seas,
Then quickly fades, then strikes on hidden reef;
The day that dawns, the rose that woos the bees,
Then sinks in gloom, then sheds its faded leaf;

The grass that 's green, the smoke that stains the sky,
Then quickly withers, then melts out of sight, —
These all proclaim that death is ever nigh,
And overshadows all the realms of light.

The mighty warrior with his armies brave,
The woman fair with all her blooming charms,
But minister to the devouring grave,
And captives fall in death's all-conquering arms.

While thus, my child, I listen to the waves,
And hear their voices hoarse with all despair,
Thy stainless brow the star-gleam gently laves,
And thou seest joy and gladness everywhere.

Ah! hold thine eyes thus ever to the light
That shines from heaven upon our darkling way;
Keep still thy spotless soul within God's sight
Waiting the dawn of his eternal day.

HUGO.

ONCE WHILE I STOOD WATCHING THE BILLOWY SEA

ONCE while I stood watching the billowy sea
I saw a full-rigged ship go by,
Enwrapped in waves and in obscurity,
Sailing beneath a starlit sky.

And as I peered into the heavens deep
Which leaned upon the abyss below,
A voice fell on my ear as when in sleep
We hear words spoken long ago.

"Poet, 't is well, poet with the sad brow,
Thou dreamest near the unquiet waves,
And the dark ocean's depths thy thought doth plough,
To search the mysteries of its caves:

The sea, 't is God, whom joy and woe proclaim,
Whom destiny names and points out;
The mind, 't is God, and God the stars that flame, —
The ship is man tossing in doubt."

HUGO.

NIGHT TO OCEAN

HOW many sailors true, how many captains bold,
Starting upon their distant course all light of heart,
Have vanished utterly through the horizon dark:
How many too have helpless sunk — O fortune hard —
Into unfathomed waves, beneath a moonless sky,
Buried forever out of sight in ocean's depths!

How many masters dead with their ill-fated crews!
The hurricane has rent the page of all their life,
And with a breath has scattered it far on the seas:
No one shall ever know their end in the great deep;
Each passing wave has seized remorseless on its prey;
This the frail boat has crushed, and that the sailors whelmed.

Not one knoweth your fate, poor heads abandoned, lost;
Under the waves ye roll across the sombre plains,
Striking your bony skulls against harsh-grating rocks:
How many parents old, who had but one dream left,
Have died waiting through weary days upon the shore,
Waiting for you; for you, alas, who never came!

In village gatherings they sometimes speak of you :
Sitting on rusted anchors, many a circle gay
Still mingle for awhile your names, O vanished shades,
With laughter free and song and tale of adventure,
With kisses stolen from the fair you left behind,
While you, poor souls, forever sleep in oozy slime.

Friends ask : Where are they now ? Are they kings in
far isles ?
Have they abandoned us for distant shores more bright ?
Then thought of you is buried in forgetfulness ;
You sink in waves, your names are lost to memory.
Time, which on every shadow casts a deeper shade,
Upon the sombre ocean throws oblivion.

Soon from the eyes of all your image fades away :
Has not this one his bark, and this other his plough ?
Alone in the dark nights, when storms like demons rage,
Your widows with white hair, weary of waiting long,
Speak still of you with love, while they the ashes stir,
The ashes stir, of hearths and hearts all desolate.

And when their eyes at last are closed by death's chill
hand,
No lips will whisper more your names ; not e'en a
stone

Night to Ocean

In narrow bound of churchyard where the echoes sleep;
Not e'en a willow green whose leaves the winter steals;
Not even the poor beggar's dull and plaintive song,
Who pleading asks for alms at turn of ancient bridge.

Where are those sailors all who sank in unknown deeps?
O waves, ye know dark and lugubrious histories!
Black waves, at thought of which mothers shudder
with fright,
Ye tell them to yourselves when riding up the tides:
'T is this that makes those voices so despairing sad
Which wail in evening winds, when you roll toward
the shore.

HUGO.

FAIR MAIDEN, LOVE IS LIKE A MIRROR BRIGHT

FAIR maiden, love is like a mirror bright,
Wherein of thine own beauty thou hast sight,
And lingerest glad or in sweet reverie:
Or like to virtue when from forth thy heart
It drives all evil with its fiery dart,
And keeps thy soul in whitest purity.

One step below, — thou stand'st in slippery ways, —
'T is an abyss where nothing steadfast stays,
A seething whirlpool, dark and foul and vast:
Love is delightful, pure, but fatal too;
It is a child whom smoothest waters woo, —
He sees himself, leaps in, and drowns at last.

HUGO.

IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH

HOWEVER high our thought may be,
However warm the heart's strong beat,
In death's shadow we all must see
That life of man is but deceit.

Gold quickly there is turned to dross,
The teeming earth becomes a tomb;
The sweetest gain is simply loss,
The sun itself is hid in gloom.

Position, fame, honor, and power
As childish toys are worthless grown:
Art, science, and great poet's dower
Are but sick fancy's dream alone.

Love only stays and drops a tear,
Sitting in sorrow by the bed;
But when we lie upon the bier
He too will soon forget the dead.

JENSEN.

AGE AND LOVE

HE best has felt and seen
How fair man's life may bloom
Whose age still fresh and green
Is filled with love's perfume.

No beauty hides from him
Of all the world e'er saw,
Who, though his eyes be dim,
Sees love still without flaw.

The summer goes away,
The field is full of sheaves,
O spring, that stay'st for aye,
O flower world dressed in leaves.

The autumn comes to end,
The trees all naked stand,
But my gray head I bend
Over the lily hand.

JENSEN.

NOT EVERY DAY DOTH THE SUN SHINE

NOT every day doth the sun shine;
What thou wouldst have 's not always thine;
Not always mayst thy sweet will do, —
Old homely proverbs these, and true.

We learn them first from mother's lips,
And time confirms them as it slips;
But heedless youth will lightly hold
Such truths, by whomsoever told,

And laugh in his sweet month of May
Until the blossoms fall away,
The biting frost nips the green leaves,
And life his fond hopes undeceives.

Then these old proverbs come again,
And we no longer find them vain,
But take them to our inmost heart
And from them nevermore depart.

JENSEN.

IN A DARK GLEN I LAY

IN a dark glen I lay,
All sad and all alone,
When on me fell a ray
In which my home was shown.

I saw my youth's sweet home
'Mid fragrant meadows lie,
Beneath the azure dome
Of gentle spring's soft sky.

What golden light was there,
What fairest flowers' bloom!
My dream melted to air,
And all was deepest gloom.

Then I through deserts strayed
Seeking the vanished years,
Which still forever fade
From eyes blinded by tears.

KERNER.

THE DOCTOR'S WALK

AT midnight oft I go,
Lost in vague reverie,
To where some lamp's faint glow
Tells there the sufferers be.

In through the window-pane
I look, and call to mind
The remedies again
I vainly sought to find.

A rustling sound I catch
Within close to the door;
A dead man lifts the latch
And silent scans me o'er.

My dog with angry bark
Forbids the unwelcome guest,
While I pass in the dark
By memory oppressed.

KERNER.

A BATTLE HYMN

FATHER, on thee I call!
The smoke of battle rises like a cloud
And roaring cannon make the heavens loud:
Thou battle-leader, thee I call,
Father, lead thou me on.

Father, lead thou me on:
Lead me to victory, lead me to death,
Thou art my God, of thee I hold life's breath:
Lord, as thou wilt, lead thou me on;
My God, thee I confess.

My God, thee I confess:
As in the awful rush of the cyclone,
So in the storm of battle's thunder-tone,
Fountain of good, thee I confess;
Father, uphold thou me.

Father, uphold thou me:
Into thy hands my life I freely give,
Thou mayst it take, as thou alone mak'st live;
Eternal God, uphold thou me;
Father, thee I do praise.

A Battle Hymn

Father, thee I do praise:
It is no battle for mere earthly good;
The holiest defend we with our blood,
Then dying, conquering, thee I praise;
God, thee myself I give.

God, thee myself I give:
If death come now to me in battle's storm,
If on the plain be cast my lifeless form,
To thee, my God, myself I give:
Father, on thee I call.

KÖRNER.

LOVE BUILT HIMSELF, THE FOOLISH CHILD

LOVE built himself, the foolish child,
A house of fresh green leaves and flowers,
And dreamed that there when storms are wild,
Safe-sheltered, he should spend the hours.

But breath of single autumn night
Killed his fond hope and left despair,
Bearing his house with rapid flight,
Both roof and pillars, through the air.

And now he wanders all alone
Weary to death through worlds quite dead,
And gathers of his bliss, wind-blown,
Dry leaves from out the torrent's bed.

KLETKE.

EARLY GRAVES

THOU art welcome, O silvery moon,
Holiest and sweetest companion of Night!
Dost thou flee? Thought-kindling power, remain.
Lo! she stays. 'T was the passing cloud that moved.

What is fairer than such a night,
Save the blooming May awakening,
When the pearly dew drips from her locks
And with blushes she rises to walk the hills?

Ah! the grass on your graves is deep,
O noblest and tenderest, whom erst I knew!
How blissful was I when with you I saw
The reddening daybreak and the shimmering night!

KLOPSTOCK.

IN ETERNITY

HER love for him was deep as the deep sea,
Tender and true as woman's love may be.

To make him happy was her all of life,
As though she had been born to be his wife.

A month had not yet looked upon their bliss
When Death seized her and gave his fatal kiss.

Before she died one word she sought to say,
But ere she spoke her soul had flown away.

Long years he lived, nursing his heart's deep woe,
Through many summers, many winters' snow.

Her image always swam before his eye
With that last look she gave with her last sigh.

Then he too died, and entered heaven's gate,
With all his thought still fixed on his sweet mate.

And when at last they met, from death now free,
She spoke this earthly thing, — "Remember me!"

This was the word that she had sought to say,
And which she kept for this eternal day.

KUH.

IF ALL WERE SWEET AND FAIR

IF all were sweet and fair,
Accordant with thy will,
And God gave thee no share
In all the boundless ill,
How couldst thou learn to die,
O child of mortal race?
How wean thy loving eye
From earth's too winsome face?

But now from life's fair tree
The leaves fall one by one,
That thou the heavens mayst see
And know thou art God's son,
Borne on time's ebbing wave
To everlasting day,
And passing through the grave
To where Peace stays alway.

LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ.

CONTENTMENT

ON rocky cliff a tree
Stood, blooming there,
Like soul from sin all free
And from all care.

Its leaves were brightest green,
Its flowers were red;
So, earth and sky between,
Its life on sped.

"How canst thou be so strong,
So fresh and fair?
To earth all trees belong
More than to air."

To me it answer made,
Rich with perfume,
And pleasant as the shade
Of its sweet bloom:

"No soft, cool bed have I:
I stand alone;
The rock is hard and dry,
My seat a stone.

"Nathless me happy deem, —
'T is well with me:
The first, the last sunbeam
I here still see.

"If other trees than I
Have more of earth,
None have so much of sky,
None higher birth."

LAURILLARD.

FAIR HESPERUS, 'MID PALEST LIGHT

FAIR Hesperus 'mid palest light
Looks through the darkling sky again;
Another day has sunk in night
And in the quiet grave has lain.

Soft evening clouds float in the air,
And through them silvery moonbeams shine:
The pure white roses they do bear
For the dead day a wreath to twine.

O resting place of vanished days,
Dumb, silent, and unchanging past!
With thee the heart's deep sorrow stays,
With thee its joys too sweet to last.

LENAU.

THE HOUR OF PITY, MERCY'S HOUR

THE hour of pity, mercy's hour,
Comes with the peaceful, calm-faced night,
When on the thirsty, wilted flower
The dew falls from the heavenly height.

The time of moon, the time of star;
This is the pure untroubled time
When springs soft yearning for the far,
From out this vale of grief and crime.

E'en though thy heart in heat of day
Strove with thy brothers rude and wild,
The night thy anger drives away,
And makes thee gentle as a child.

The soul, doubt-fretted, then regains
Its sanctuary and believes;
Then love's fair flower from dusty plains
Looks up and opens all its leaves.

Then longing stirs to quench the hate
  Whose poison rankled in thy breast.
O hurry to thy foe, and straight
  Awaken him from slumberous rest,

To say, the tears of this blest night
  Have washed the wrath from out thy soul,
And to thy eyes restored clear sight,
  And love, which maketh sick men whole.

LENAU.

O LAYS OF MINE WIND-BLOWN

O LAYS of mine wind-blown,
Ye fall upon the earth,
Leaves of a tree alone
Which to no bloom gave birth.

O leaves wind-blown and dry,
Ye show the winter near:
Fall soft, — on graves ye lie
Of many hopes once dear.

LEUTHOLD.

THE BLACK DEATH

SHUDDER, O World! I am the Pest:
I visit every land,
On every home my seal is pressed,
By lips of Death my cheek 's caressed,
And murderous is my hand.

From Asia's strand forward I sweep,
Through murky heavens flying;
In Mecca, where the pilgrims keep
Their vigils, I my harvest reap,
And watch the living dying.

O'er hill and vale and mountain high
With palmer's staff I go,
Turning about my hungry eye;
Wherever human dwellings lie
I make a house of woe.

The greatest of Death's captains I,
The fatal foe of all;
Famine and war follow my cry,
And mothers wail when I pass by,
Throwing on earth a pall.

There is no help. To fly is vain,
I am more swift than wind;
My breath blows over the wide plain, —
Lo, countless multitudes are slain
And in their coffins shrined.

The merchant brings me in rich wares
To deck his blooming wife;
He laughs and drinks, for nothing cares;
Then from his satin-cushioned chairs
I rise and take his life.

No rock-built castle is too high
For me, no hut too low;
Upon youth's downy cheek I sigh,
And with the bloom of health forth fly,
Leaving behind Death's woe.

The eye on which my shadow falls
Will never more see light;
The wine I pour is flat and palls,
My food is meat for cannibals,
And all I touch I blight.

In Tartary I slew the khan;
In India's perfumed isles
Killed negro prince and Mussulman;
And through the night in Ispahan
The dog the corpse defiles.

The Black Death

Byzantium was a city fair,
  And Venice like a dream;
Now wails resound through mournful air,
Ungathered is the full ripe pear,
  And loud the vultures scream.

In the far north amid hoar frost
  A noble harbor lies;
There I a ship with storm uptossed
And made of all a holocaust,
  Glutting my cruel eyes.

In all the streets lie dead on dead,
  While days and months go by;
As from the desert, life has fled.
In after years it shall be said, —
  Death's city here we spy.

LINGG.

I AM CONTENT TO LIVE WITHOUT ALL FAME

I AM content to live without all fame;
To win applause of men is not my aim;
Not like a bird sing I a happy song,
But fraught with deepest yearning my notes throng.

Who hears my voice knows the sweet bliss of tears,
And feels the peace which sorrow but endears;
The world to me is deaf,—heeds not my cry,
And things it loves by me unloved pass by.

So must it be or I must silent grow,
For I can sing but what I love and know;
In midst of gloom my soul dwells in the light,
As mother-breast of stars is the deep night.

LORM.

WHERE'ER SWIFT THOUGHT CAN FLY

WHERE'ER swift thought can fly
Are sorrow, guilt, and pain,
And fleet time passing by
Divides all things in twain.

In little space between
Lies dream of love and bliss,
Which hardly can be seen,
So airy thin it is.

LORM.

DREAMING I WANDER THROUGH THE BOWERS OF SPRING

DREAMING I wander through the bowers of spring,
And look into the wide, wide world;
Fled is all sorrow, trouble, suffering,
And joy's bright banners are unfurled.

O glorious Nature, in thy beauty dressed,
Like love's pure glance is flight of time;
Thou art still she whom to my heart I pressed
In my fond youth's fresh, dawning prime.

This is the fragrant breath that on me blew
When I a child through meadows went;
This is the same ethereal, mystic hue
Which with my sweetest thoughts was blent.

O thou most wonderful, most gracious, fair!
No word, I know, can touch thy heart;
For all our joy and all our bitter care
Still dumb and feelingless thou art.

Ever thou sayst: "I rage and I am meek;
I bring the night, make new day start;
I feed the nettle, paint the rose's cheek:
Why praise? To me nothing thou art."

E'en so, — with deepest love I see thy face,
And with glad soul to thee draw nigh;
Nature, how canst thou wear so sweet a grace
And yet be dead to sympathy?

MILOW.

THE FALL OF THE LEAVES

THE naked boughs in the chill air
Hung trembling, and the autumn blast
Which stripped them of their beauty bare
Howled mocking as it onward passed,
Like demon who no pity knows,
But laughs in scorn of mortal woes.

A youth upon whose pallid cheek
The hectic flush had set death's mark,
By suffering made sad and meek,
Walked slowly through the growing dark,
And looking on the woods' decay
Poured forth his melancholy lay : —

"O Woods, where I so oft have strayed
In my fair boyhood's happiest hours,
Or lying in your leafy shade
Have dreamed of love's immortal bowers,
Where are those days, where are those dreams
Which life uplit with heavenly gleams ?

"Ah, here the sweet birds sang for me,
And purling brooks made music clear,
And my young soul was strong and free,
And joy forth beamed through every tear,
While all my thoughts were pure and fresh
As laughing girls when hearts they mesh.

"Are ye, like me, O Woods, grown sad,
Stretching your arms above the grave
Of all that made you fair and glad,
While at your feet the mourning wave,
That babbled erst its merry song,
Now silent flows dead leaves among?

"For you the spring will come again,
And kiss your boughs till they outbloom;
For you will fall the gentle rain
To wake your children from the tomb;
To you again the birds will come,
And bees among your flowers will hum.

"But I, oh, nevermore shall see
Your purple buds break into green,
Never rapt in sweet reverie
Shall dream your leafy boughs between,
Nor hear glad song of bird or brook,
Lying at ease in shady nook.

The Fall of the Leaves

"Death on my cheek his breath has blown,
The bud is nipped, the fruit is dead;
The hopes I lived by, — all have flown,
And soon the shears will clip life's thread:
O bitter grief, O boundless woe,
That you remain, and I must go!"

MILLEVOYE.

A LITTLE PINE SOMEWHERE

A LITTLE pine somewhere
In the deep wood is growing;
In garden fresh and fair
A rosebush now is blowing:
They both above thy grave
Their branches soon shall wave.

In green meadow somewhere
Two black steeds grazing feed,
Or sniff the morning air,
And bound away with speed:
With measured step and slow,
Soon to thy grave they 'll go.

MÖRICKE.

A SONG, A SONG

A SONG, a song!
Amid these songs so full of pain,
A lark's song of delight;
A clear spring morn glistening through rain,
And through fresh dewdrops bright;
A song, a song where laughter rings
And pearly tears to glad eyes brings, —
This is, 'mid these May carollings,
The song I would indite.

For thou art mine and I am thine, —
What time-worn notes are these?
But lovers and their love divine
No other sounds so please.
O each to each, we both belong, —
How shall I end this tender song,
How my pure yearning still prolong,
Until I find heart's-ease?

Then fly, just as thou art, fast fly,
O song, my love to greet,
And on her table gently lie,
Or better, at her feet;
And sing and tell her how I pine, —
O thou art mine, and I am thine, —
And kiss her eyes and mouth so fine
Until we two shall meet.

NIONDORF.

TO WHOM ALL PAIN IS LIFE AND LIFE ALL PAIN

TO whom all pain is life and life all pain,
The anguish I have felt he too may feel,
Who in a moment vanish sees all weal
So soon as he begins to think it gain;

Who groping through a labyrinth in vain
Seeks outlet which no searchings will reveal;
To whom love never comes with soft appeal
But black despair follows with iron chain;

Who every lightning-flash to strike him dead,
And every stream conjures to drown his woes;
Who their dark resting-place envies the dead,
Where torture cannot wake them from repose,
And love no more his poison drops can shed, —
He feels like me, and me he wholly knows.

PLATEN.

I FAIN WOULD KEEP MYSELF ALL FREE

I.

I FAIN would keep myself all free,
Deep hidden from the world away,
And along some quiet stream I'd flee,
Shaded by trees from the sun's ray;

Would from the dull earth gladly rise,
By songs of summer birds beguiled,
And mingle with the azure skies,
Far from the crowd by sin defiled;

Would seldom touch upon the shore,
Nor even then my bark would quit,
But pluck a rose, holding the oar,
And straight 'long liquid path onflit;

Would see afar the cattle graze,
The flowers bursting into bloom,
The vintagers in evening rays,
And mowers 'mid the hay's perfume.

Would nothing crave but the pure light,
And from the wave my thirst to slake,
And stars to comfort me by night,
Amid a sleeping world awake.

I Fain would Keep Myself all Free

II.

What meaning in this childish fear,
This idle wish and wholly vain?
To thee the world will still be near;
Then overcome it, and so reign.

E'en couldst thou put it far away,
Yearning would drive thee back again;
Learn then to love men, with them stay;
Thus only canst thou cure thy pain.

The flower withers and then dies,
The child will grow to be a man;
The soul is deep as the deep skies,
And the abyss thou canst not scan.

Thou see'st it, yet thou passest by,
In life's all-earnest, eager chase;
On fair days dark days follow nigh,
And in the end none win the race.

As through the heavens swims the moon,
Now bright and now dipt in a cloud,
So changes still thy life's sweet boon,
Until thou sleepest in thy shroud.

PLATEN.

WOMAN'S LOVE

A woman's love is like a spring,
Which, if the ice in fetters bind,
To the first sunbeam's kiss will fling
Its waters pure and unconfined.

A rosebush like is woman's love,
Which, if the north wind rob its bloom,
When spring's first breath its head above
Is blown, upfills with rich perfume.

A woman's love is like a star,
Which, if a thousand times it shine
In vain, still watches from afar,
Till the beloved shall seek its shrine.

PLONNIES.

SUNDAY MORNING

THROUGH valleys ringing clear
The tones of bells and song
Fall softly on my ear,
And, shady walks along,
The sunbeams gently play
On this sweet Sabbath day.

Through quiet fields now see
The crowds, in gay attire,
Moving like children free
To where the cross-crowned spire
Looks on the peaceful plain,
Clothed with rich golden grain.

How calm the waters flow!
How still the flowers seem!
While from the long ago
There steals a blissful dream:
Again I am a child
Beside my mother mild.

ROBERT REINECK.

ALL THINGS ARE NOW AT REST

ALL things are now at rest, —
Man's heart, the earth, the air,
And the flowers are caressed
By the brooks which through them fare.

The silvery moonbeams fall
Soft as the white snowflake;
In the wide world, of all
Alone I am awake.

Deep peace is in my soul,
Nor joy nor sorrow there;
Like needle to the pole
I turn to thee, my fair.

Thy image still I see
In sky and limpid stream;
By day my song of glee,
By night my love-lit dream.

RODENBERG.

THE LOST SONG

WITHIN I often hear
Soft notes of a lost song,
Which fall upon my ear
In rich melodious throng.

To match its music I
Seek words, but seek in vain,
And when I come to die
I still shall hear the strain.

ROLLETT.

SEEK YE FOR TREASURES RICH AND RARE?

MOUNTAINS and hills and vales between,
A merry song my guide,
I wander over meadows green,
The gurgling brooks beside.
Dull sorrows all have flown away;
O sweet sunshine,
To-morrow will not come to-day,
The present hour is mine.

Upon my cheek the golden light
Falls like fair Nature's kiss,
And through her veil serenest night
Looks out upon my bliss.
O roaming blest, eternal spring
Of pleasure pure,
Let thy bright waters to me bring
For every ill the cure.

Seek Ye for Treasures Rich and Rare?

Far from the city's smoke I flee,
  Far from the crowded street,
'Neath the blue sky and blooming tree
  I walk my bliss to meet.
Glad welcome find I everywhere,
  In dale, on hill;
Where'er I rest, where'er I fare,
  I feel pure joy's deep thrill.

So long as love of life shall bide
  With me as happy guest,
This wondrous world, so fair and wide,
  Shall seem to me most blest.
Seek ye for treasures rich and rare?
  Oh, see them here,—
On the green earth, in balmy air,
  To weary hearts so near.

ROQUETTE.

WHEN LENGTHENING SHADOWS FALL

WHEN lengthening shadows fall
From mountains towards the sea,
Then souls hear love's soft call,
And sink in reverie.

When sea-gulls to the shore
Fly from the billowy deep,
Then feel I yearning sore
Near those I love to sleep.

In morning's glittering ray
The traveller journeys on,
But at the fall of day
Homeward his heart is drawn.

RÜCKERT.

FULL MANY A SONG I SING

FULL many a song I sing,
Can sing whate'er you will,
In many tones can ring
The joys which pure hearts thrill,
Yet love I but one lay,
Would sing it all the day,
And, singing, find it sweeter still.

A shepherd saw I late,
In fragrant meadow green,
Where brooks to blithe birds prate,
That sing their beauty's sheen.
Upon his reed he blew
A note clear as the dew,
Which falls through summer night serene.

A little now it rose,
And then again it fell,
Just as a zephyr blows,
Then dies within a dell;
And still he found it sweet,
And still he would repeat
The air which held me like a spell.

He blew his reed, and then
He ceased and looked around,
And then he blew again,
Still lying on the ground,
And watched, while he did blow,
His lambs skip to and fro,
In sweet accord with the pure sound.

RÜCKERT.

NOT FOR THEE ALONE

GREAT Nature's glories do not shine
Merely, O man, to make thee fine;
For her own pleasure sometimes she
Doth clothe herself in bravery.

The nightingale most sweetly sings
When sleep o'er thee its mantle flings,
And fairest flowers from dreams awake
Ere dawn of day begins to break.

The butterfly will take her flight
Where not an eye beholds the sight;
Rich pearls are hid in ocean's deep,
And in dark mines the diamonds sleep.

O child! since both thy ear and eye
Bring pleasures to thee pure and high,
Grudge not thy mother what she takes
When for herself she jewels makes.

RÜCKERT.

A WISH

SOMETHING wish and something love,
Something hope must every heart,
And some fear of loss must prove,
And of pain must bear his part.

Joy and pleasure he must find
In some thing or great or small,
Else his days, by idle wind
Idly blown, like leaves will fall.

Far from overweening pride,
Far from indolent repose,
May my life still widening glide
Like a river to its close.

RÜCKERT.

REST AT HOME

I STOOD upon the height
While the great sun went down,
And saw the golden light
On evening place her crown.

The heavens distilled sweet dew
Upon the earth's fair breast,
And soothing tones stole through
The world, lulling to rest.

I said: O heart, feel thou
The calm that 's everywhere,
And with great Nature now
In sleep drown all thy care.

The flowers close their eyes,
Bewitched in balmy dream;
The waves 'neath darkling skies
Flow on in stiller stream.

Now in her fragrant nest
The sylph has laid her head,
The dragon-fly 's at rest
In his cool, reedy bed.

Rest at Home

The gold-chafer has sought
His cradle in the rose;
And homeward now is brought
The flock to quiet close.

The lark, from upper air,
Amidst moist clover sleeps,
And the thick-wooded lair
The deer from danger keeps.

Now who a cottage owns
In holy peace sits there,
Hears the soft, loving tones
Of wife and children fair.

Ah, would I too might rest
At home with those I love,
As, in the leafy nest,
The tender-moaning dove!

RÜCKERT.

WHEN MODEST EVE

WHEN modest eve
Her couch doth leave,
And walks into the wooded vale,
And clouds upglow with richer hue,
And shepherds 'mid the falling dew
Their flocks drive through the twilight pale;

When timid hare
With cautious air
Goes limping through the fragrant grass,
And from the covert steals the deer,
And stags come forth without a fear,
And look about and onward pass;

When rustic clowns
Wear flower crowns,
And homeward move in happy throng,
Upon their arms the rake and scythe,
And reaper maidens brown and blithe
Make music with sweet laugh and song; —

Then dreaming I
Stand 'neath the sky,
And, looking on the peaceful scene,
Feel thrill of joy no words can tell,
And from my eyes the sweet tears well
Like dewdrops from the vault serene.

To blackbird's song
I listen long,
And hear his evening hymn uprise,
While 'mid the alder-bush's leaves
The nightingale tells how she grieves,
And in the sedge the plover cries;

Until I hear,
Or far or near,
No sound save droning beetle's flight,
Or chirp of cricket short and shrill,
Till silence comes and he is still,
The last to bid the world good-night;

Till from the sky,
With wakeful eye,
The evening star with love looks down,
Till all the heavens darker grow,
And all the infinite worlds upglow,
And night wears her rich-jewelled crown.

SALIS.

WHEN EVENING SOFTLY STEALS I FLEE THE NOISY TOWN

WHEN evening softly steals I flee the noisy town,
And silent walk alone through dew-besprinkled fields,
Led by the yearning soul,
And by sweet memory.

The hues of setting sun in the horizon glow
And tinge with gold the woods which crown the dusky hill,
Where the gigantic arms
Of windmills slowly turn.

I lean against the lock and drink the meadow's breath,
And watch the cattle stand knee-deep in the lush grass,
While flowers weep pearly dew
Over the dying day.

The robin in the alder-bush chirps sweet good-night;
All else is still the leaf-embowered village round,
Where the blue, curling smoke
Uprises through the trees.

When Evening Softly Steals

The dew more fragrant grows as waning twilight dies,
And draws the veil of night over the dusky plain,
While I with wistful gaze
Look on the fading scene.

Fair lands stretch far beyond the boundaries of sight;
But darkness fills the weary space which severs me
From all my heart's sweet love,
And tears of longing flow.

SALIS.

THE MIGHT OF FREEDOM

AND had they power mine eyes to blind,
Could they thereby darken the sun?
E'en though in prison me they bind,
Yet shall fair Freedom's work be done.

And though my hand with chains be bound,
Because the pen like sword it flung,
Yet hand with pen shall still be found
While faith lingers true hearts among.

And though my word in silence dies,
Or like a flickering flame expires,
One tone God easily supplies
In million-voiced thunder-choirs.

Not all at once shall vanish spring,
With sap and strength and sound and light,
Because one bird has ceased to sing,
Struck dead by hand of clownish wight.

SALLET.

A CHILD, A STRANGER AND ASTRAY

A CHILD, a stranger and astray, upclimbs
With fresh young heart the glacier's silver tower,
Which lifts its gleaming front above the clouds.
On that far height he will his father see,
His fatherland, — there heaven will surely find,
And entering at the open door, will be at home ;
For there the sun each day relights his torch,
And there the stars at night rest like a flock ;
There stands the purple gate, uplifted high,
Through which the shepherd drives them when day sinks,
And leads them back again when morning springs.
So mounts the child, — loses his way, sits lost,
Sad and alone, alone amid the storm
Which blows his whitened hair about his face,
For suddenly, through fear, he has grown old.
A cold he stays upon the icy crag ;
No more can he descend where meadows sleep,
Made sweet by breath of flowers, where erst he played,

Nor see them e'en, for darkened is his eye,
And the green earth below so distant lies,
That human voice no more can reach him now,
Not e'en a father's and a mother's voice,
Who followed him with anxious care awhile,
Then weeping looked upon his upward course,
Until they sank away and dust became.
This to the child a spirit softly tells,
Who with him stays. Now night is near;
Dark clouds gather about, portending storm.
O'ercome, he knows no more: how in? how out?
How down? save in the awful chasm beneath —
Then golden wings sprout forth, and he again
Swims in the air, and to his father flies.
Whoe'er thou art, O man, thou art this child.

L. SCHEFER.

IN LIFE'S FRESH EARLY MORN OF MAY

IN life's fresh early morn of May
I left my father's home,
With all my glad youth's holiday,
In unknown lands to roam.

My whole inheritance I cast
With joyous faith aside,
And, pilgrim's staff in hand, I passed
Into the world so wide.

A mighty hope stirred in my heart
And urged me on my way,—
The road is plain, it said, but start
And walk on towards the day,

Until thou seest a golden gate,
Through which thou need'st but go
And earthly things will vanish straight
And heavenly things upglow.

Oft evening came and morn returned,
But never stood I still,
Nor saw the thing for which I yearned
With my young-hearted will.

In Life's Fresh Early Morn of May

Athwart my path high mountains lay,
And torrents' swollen stream,
But still I found or made a way,
And followed still my dream.

At length I reached a river's bank
Which flowed fast towards the east,
And in the flood, with courage frank,
I leaped, nor feared the least.

Forth swept I, floated on the wave,
Far out into the sea,
But still saw not the thing I crave,
Nor found where it may be.

Thither, alas! no pathway leads,
And heaven, deep blue and clear,
Remains untouched by earthly needs,
And There is never Here.

SCHILLER.

TO QUIET VALE WHERE SHEPHERDS STAY

TO quiet vale where shepherds stay,
There came with each new-coming year,
Just when the lark pours forth his lay,
A maiden wondrous fair and dear.

In that sweet vale she was not born,
Nor whence she came did any know,
And when she vanished like May morn,
No one could tell where she did go.

To feel her presence made hearts glad,
So gentle was she and so fair;
And her high mien itself forbade
That any should too boldly dare.

Bright flowers and luscious fruit she bore,
Brought from some happy far-off land,
And ripened on some sunny shore,
Where Nature is forever bland.

To all a precious boon she gave,
To this, fair flowers; to that one, fruit;
The blooming youth and old man grave
Had each what best his heart might suit.

To her right welcome was each guest;
But when a loving pair drew near,
To them she gave her richest, best,
And thrilled them with her sweetest cheer.

SCHILLER.

MUCH DO MEN SPEAK AND MUCH DO THEY DREAM

MUCH do men speak and much do they dream
Of the better coming days;
To some far-off happy golden gleam
They turn their thoughts always;
And the world grows old and again grows young,
But Hope ever dwells its bowers among.

By the cradle smiling and fair she sits,
She gleams o'er the glad boy's head;
All brightly about the youth she flits,
She prays by the old man's bed;
And when in the earth we sink to rest
We plant Hope's symbol on the grave's crest.

Immortal Hope is no fancy mere
Born of a sickly brain;
In the heart she speaks with accent clear, —
Man's life is godlike gain;
And the words who doth hear will ne'er believe
That sweet Hope the trusting soul can deceive.

SCHILLER.

AH! FROM THE DEPTHS OF THIS DARK VALE

AH! from the depths of this dark vale,
Where gloomy mists are born,
Could I on wings high upward sail,
Unto eternal morn!
There I behold the hills all fair
For ever young and green;
O could I cleave the bright, blue air
And rest their peaks between.

Celestial harmonies I hear,
Tones of immortal love,
And balmy zephyrs stealing near
Breathe fragrance caught above;
I see of golden fruit the gleam,
Glowing 'mid sunlit bowers,
And blossoms which undying seem
Embalm the sacred hours.

What joy upon those heights to dwell
Where beauty never dies,
To taste the bliss no words can tell
Amid the infinite skies!
But a deep stream's dark, swollen tide
Threatens with sullen frown
That all who seek its waves to ride
Shall in its waters drown.

A trembling bark my eyes behold;
But, ah! no boatman's there.
Enter without a thought; be bold;
Its sails strong angels bear.
Thou needest faith, thou must be brave;
The gods no pledges make,
But the higher powers across the wave
Thy soul to heaven will take.

SCHILLER.

A WEDDING RING

OH, I could never dream
That the warm flowing stream
In winter's breath
Would freeze to death;

That little golden ring,
Light as a feathery wing,
Like a millstone
Would soon be grown;

That after day so bright
Would follow hopeless night.
Illusion brief;
O bitter grief!

SIEBEL.

A BLIND FATHER TO HIS CHILD

LAY thy soft hands upon my eyes, sweet child:
Ah! this is balm; thou art so pure, so mild;
I feel each tender pulse's gentle thrill;
Stir not, but sit close to thy father still.

Long years ago — I scarce believe it true —
I had clear sight and saw the heavens blue,
And sat out there, beneath the apple-tree,
Gazing upon the scene in reverie.

A sudden rustle, and, as quick as thought,
I felt my eyes by two soft hands fast caught;
Ah! well I knew the touch of those sweet hands,
Which thus had closed my eyes with loving bands.

It was thy mother, then a maiden fair,
Who noiselessly had crept behind my chair:
I guessed her name, she gave me the first kiss,
And soon we tasted holy wedlock's bliss.

A Blind Father to His Child

When now thou lay'st thy hands upon my eyes
I thrill, and feel again glad, sweet surprise;
It is as though the darkness fell away,
And she stood there who lies in the cold clay.

Oh, I could paint her features, line for line,
As she looked, standing there in May's sunshine,
Close by my side, beneath the apple-tree,
While I gazed on her in rapt reverie.

And now I feel thy hands upon my face
I dream the gloom will soon to sight give place,
And thy sweet mother, with a loving kiss,
Will change my darkness to the light of bliss.

SEIDLE.

NOTHING ABIDES

ON me sorrow her heavy hand did lay;
I greeted her, and soon she went away.

Joy came, singing to me a mirthful lay;
I greeted him, and he too went his way.

What shall I hope? for what good shall I pray?
Nothing abides, all things do pass away.

SIEBEL.

O NATURE, PURE AND FAIR

O NATURE, pure and fair,
Around me everywhere,
Be thou my gentle guide
In all my wanderings wide.

And when I weary am,
Upon thy bosom calm
Like a child I 'll sink to rest
Upon a mother's breast.

With thee I find repose,
Will love thee to life's close;
Lead thou me by the hand
Up to God's better land.

STOLBERG.

MY CATS

THE first of May my cat gave to the world
Six of the loveliest kittens you might see,
May kittens all, snow-white, save their black tails.
It was, in truth, an ornamental litter.
The cook, however, — cooks are cruel all,
And sweet humanity thrives not in kitchens, —
Of all the six was bent on drowning five;
Five of my little, snow-white, black-tailed kittens,
This wicked woman had in mind to murder.
I taught her better sense, — may Heaven bless
My tender heart! Meanwhile these lovely kittens
Grew fast as weeds, and gambolled in short time,
With upraised tails, about my house and hearth;
Despite the angry brow of thwarted cook
They grew, and every night before her window
They tried their voices, all in concert singing;
And I, as I beheld them prosper so,
Did praise myself and my humanity.
A year has passed, — my kittens are all cats.
May-day is here, — how shall I truly paint
The spectacle which now unfolds itself!
From cellar to the garret my whole house,

In every corner, is all filled with litters;
In chests and baskets, under stairs and tables
There lie the cats surrounded by their kittens;
And the old mother — 't is unspeakable —
Sleeps unconcerned in the cook's virginal bed.
And every one of all the seven cats
Has seven, think of it, young kittens,
May kittens all, snow-white, save their black tails.
The cook 's insane, and I am powerless
To calm the fury of this cruel woman.
Them all, the nine-and-forty, will she drown,
And I, myself, alas, have lost my head.
Humanity, how shall I save thy honor?
What shall I do with six-and-fifty cats?

STORM.

DEATH'S WARNING

I FEEL, I scarce know what, — a pain,
Uneasy sense of something wrong;
It goes, but still it comes again,
As though to me it doth belong.

When to another I would tell
Its nature, words I do not find;
And so I say, "All will be well;"
But I am restless, unresigned.

The world begins to look quite strange,
And hope grows less from day to day;
Now, suddenly, I mark the change,
And see Death coming straight my way.

STORM.

BURY THY DEAREST LOVE

BURY thy dearest love; still thou shalt find
Life must be lived, and, in the stress of time,
Thy self-asserting self will battle on.
This proved I lately in a crowd of friends,
Where pleasant words to speech more charming grew,
And I myself was not the stillest there.
The wine shot pearls within the crystal glass,
And, hammer-like, the blood beat in the veins;
All suddenly I heard amid the talk, —
It was no vain delusion, though most strange, —
From out the distance heard a quiet voice,
Which, struggling painfully for utterance,
Spoke in such tones that I shrank back afraid,
"Why all this noise, since thou knowest I sleep?"

STORM.

MOTHER AND CHILD

"WHY, mother, do little sister's eyes
Shine fair as the stars in the deep skies?
The golden balls are not so bright
Which gleam in the tree on Christmas night."

"Little sister's eyes, my child, so shine
Because in them dwells Love divine;
He lights his torch in the pure of heart,
And from their eyes sends his winged dart."

"Sweet mother, I love thee, — look quick, and say
If in my eyes too thou seest his ray."
"Most surely, my child." "O mother dear,
Thine own are than the sun more clear."

STURM.

WHO LOVES NOT WOMAN, WINE, AND SONG

"WHO loves not woman, wine, and song
Remains a fool his whole life long."
Now in good sooth
Is this the truth?

Who woman loves is seldom wise,
And singers have their miseries;
And wine, I hardly need to say,
To woe and folly leads the way.

Then, fair soother,
Doctor Luther,
Whate'er a man may love or not,
He is, it seems, but a poor sot.

STRAUSS.

THE PILGRIM OF REST

MOST calm and still thou leadest, Night,
Through space thy spheres of heavenly gleam!
Do there, above, dwell peace and light,
While here all is a dream?

The high and consecrated hours
Of holiest, tenderest sentiment
Vanish, in strife with earthly powers,
To shadowy element.

The conqueror wears a withering crown,
His glory is a death-wreath mere,
Which he is hastening to lay down
On life's lone, waste frontier.

Thee seek I, Rest! but thee, Repose!
Seek thy fair star in the pure sky;
'Mid darkness, wandering, and 'mid woes,
Thy pilgrim comes to die.

TIEDGE.

THOUGH TEAR-BEDEWED THY PILLOW BE

THOUGH tear-bedewed thy pillow be,
And thy unrested eyelids ache,
Soon thou shalt slumber soft and free,
Where nevermore can care thee wake.

Whate'er thy pain, be not afraid,
Time swiftly flies to cut life's thread;
Four small thin boards, if rightly laid,
Will make the weariest heart a bed.

A hand thou surely too shalt find
To press thy tired eyelids down,
And place sweet flowers, with ribbons twined,
Upon thy coffin as a crown.

Death stoops to bring release from pain,
To give the rest which life denies;
No man so poor but he shall gain
The wealth which comes to him who dies.

TRÄGER.

THE CHAPEL STANDS HIGH ON THE HILL

THE chapel stands high on the hill,
And looks into the vale below,
Where laughing winds a sparkling rill,
And shepherd lad his pipe doth blow.

The bells toll sadly down the dale,
The plaintive funeral chant is heard;
The shepherd boy's blithe notes now fail,
And his young eyes with tears are blurred.

They bear them to their mountain grave
Who through the vale poured forth glad song.
O shepherd boy, be strong and brave,
For thee the bells will toll ere long.

UHLAND.

THE SHEPHERD'S SUNDAY SONG

THIS is the Sabbath day:
I am in the wide fields alone;
But one bell more peals silvery tone,
And all sounds die away.

Adoring here I kneel:
O sacred awe, mysterious air,
As though spirits were bowed in prayer,
To make with me appeal.

The heavens far away
Through depths serene and solemn peer,
Seeming to long to come more near:
This is the Sabbath day.

UHLAND.

A CHILD'S DEATH

"WHAT sweetest sounds are these I hear,
From sleep awakening me?
See who it is, O mother dear,
Who makes such melody."

"I nothing hear and nothing see, —
By dreams thou art beguiled;
No one makes music here for thee,
My suffering, poor child."

"It is no earthly tone I hear
Which fills me with delight,
But angels call with voices clear;
'O mother mine, good-night!'"

UHLAND.

A MOTHER'S HEART

A ROVING youth, with wanderer's staff in hand,
His home regained from journeyings in far land.

All travel-stained, his face scorched by the sun,
From whom shall recognition first be won?

His dearest friend he met, entering the town,
But he looked on him with unmeaning frown.

Then moved he on, following the heart's sweet lead,
To greet the maid whose love was life's high meed.

Hard by her door she sat like blooming rose:
He speaks, — alas! she him no longer knows.

He turned and brushed away the starting tear,
And wandered farther still, he scarce knew where.

But, as it chanced, he passed the church door by,
Whence issuing his mother he did spy.

"God's blessing on thee!" — this was all he said.
"My son!" — and on his breast she laid her head.

Whatever change may come, a mother's heart
Still knows her child, and at his voice will start.

VOGL.

VAIN EFFORT

WITH earthen cup I sought to dip
The living wave of crystal stream,
But when I brought it to my lip,
Flown was the heavenly gleam.

Rich music in my heart I heard,
Sweet as the breath of new-blown flowers;
But when my tongue with song was stirred,
Gone were the heavenly powers.

VOLKMAN.

SUBLIME FOLLY

SUBLIMEST folly! — from their camps uprise
Two mighty armies, eager for the fray;
The drumbeat rolls, the brazen trumpets bray,
And guns and bayonets flash against the skies.

Now shall be shown on which side victory lies;
Swords gleam, the booming cannon hurl dismay,
The quick, sharp rifle-shots for death make way,
On high the bird of evil omen cries.

Men fall as in the field the full ripe grain
When bending reapers swing the sickle's blade,
In ranks they fall, never to rise again, —
But wherefore the dread holocaust thus made?
That past all doubt man may make this truth plain:
On honor, more than life, his heart is stayed.

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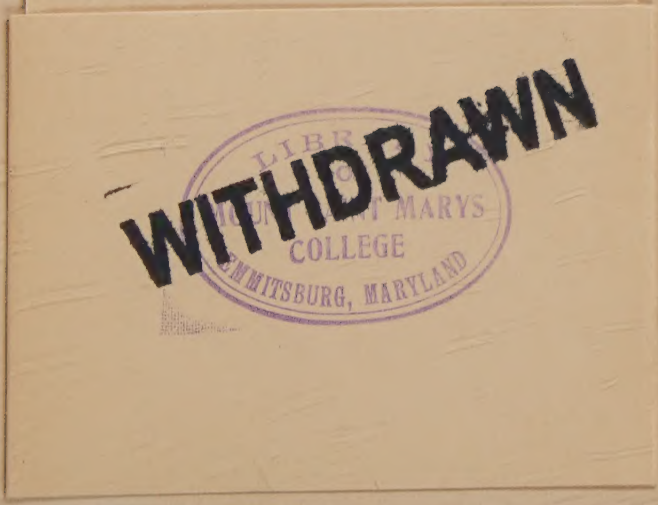
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